

TEACHING LITERACY SKILLS WITH GRAPHIC NOVELS TO ELEMENTARY  
STUDENTS: CURRICULUM UNIT FOR GRADES 1-6

By

Staci R. Gulsvig, B.S.

A Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Masters of Education

in

Language and Literacy

University of Alaska Fairbanks

July 2017

APPROVED:

Maureen Hogan, Committee Chair  
Carie Green, Committee Member  
Patrick Marlow, Committee Member  
Sabine Siekmann, Committee Member  
Cindy Fabbri, Chair  
*Department of Education*

### **Abstract**

Today, many elementary educators praise teaching graphic novels to all kinds of learners, because they inspire students to build healthy reading habits. Yet, there is a lack of resources for elementary teachers to utilize this genre to teach the literacy skills students need. Those same literacy skills are applied when reading the visual elements of graphic novels. How can elementary teachers use graphic novels in their classroom curriculum to increase student achievement on comprehension skills and strategies? To answer this question I created a multi-grade level curriculum for four to ten students, four days a week, for eight weeks. The graphic novel I used is comprised of seven different graphic stories and authors, and shows different ways graphic novels use layout, visuals, and words. The structure of the curriculum is that each story focuses on one visual element of graphic novels and relates that to a specific literacy comprehension skills and strategy. The resulting curriculum showed the ability for students to significantly increase their motivation and achievement when applying comprehension skills and strategies in a new genre of literature. In conclusion, this paper and curriculum project provides elementary educators with the knowledge and tools needed to implement graphic novels into the classroom curriculum.

## Table of Contents

|  | Pages |
|--|-------|
| Introduction .....                                   | 5     |
| Statement of Problem, Research Question .....        | 6     |
| Rationale, Aims .....                                | 7     |
| Literature Review .....                              | 11    |
| Reasons for Teaching with Comics .....               | 11    |
| How to Read the Elements of a Comic .....            | 12    |
| Practical Elementary Applications of Comics .....    | 14    |
| Literature that Assists Teachers to use Comics ..... | 17    |
| Theoretical Framework .....                          | 21    |
| New Literacy Studies .....                           | 21    |
| Input .....  | 23    |
| Comprehensible Output Hypothesis .....               | 25    |
| Statement of Bias .....                              | 28    |
| Methods .....  | 29    |
| Graphic Novel Book Club Unit .....                   | 33    |
| Weekly Flow .....                                    | 34    |
| Limitations and Outcomes .....                       | 35    |
| Reflections .....                                    | 37    |
| Lesson 1: Whatzits .....                             | 37    |
| Lesson 2: Under the Floorboards .....                | 38    |
| Lesson 3: The Soldiers Daughter .....                | 40    |

|                                       |     |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| Lesson 4: The Butter Thief .....      | 41  |
| Lesson 5: Spring Cleaning .....       | 42  |
| Lesson 6: The Keeper's Treasure ..... | 43  |
| Lesson 7: The Escape Option .....     | 44  |
| Conclusion .....                      | 45  |
| References .....                      | 46  |
| Appendices .....                      | 49  |
| Appendix A .....                      | 49  |
| Appendix B .....                      | 58  |
| Appendix C .....                      | 71  |
| Appendix D .....                      | 80  |
| Appendix E .....                      | 90  |
| Appendix F .....                      | 98  |
| Appendix G .....                      | 106 |



### **Introduction**

Are you familiar with Superman, X-men, Archie and the Gang, Sunday morning comics? Remember anticipating for the next edition of these comics to come out so you could continue reading? Does Baby Mouse, Bone, Squish, or Amulet sound familiar? They do to children who love reading graphic novels today. What is more, these children have that same anticipation of getting their hands on the next book in these series. Being literate today now requires readers to simultaneously look at and comprehend both printed text and graphic methods of presenting ideas and messages (Monnin, 2013), and graphic novels are a medium that does just that. It is important for educators to see if this new format of literature can be implemented into classroom literacy curriculums to improve language art skills.

Many have debated about what qualifies as a “graphic novel” (Labio, 2011). Indeed, the definition of “graphic novels” and “comics” varies from person to person, and the terms are often used interchangeably and are changing over time. It is ever changing because creators of graphic novels mold and change the format to fit their means of expressing a story through the blend of words and pictures. Two different scholars, Patricia Mainardi and Pascal Lefever both agree that multiple pictures in a sequential form is necessary, but disagree about the hierarchical roles the pictures in panels have over the use of text in this genre is debated (Labio, 2011). Even with in my own family the term “comics” means something different to everyone. My mom thinks those are just what are found in the newspaper, but my sister thinks books such as the “Dairy of a Wimpy Kid” are comics. For the purpose of this project I define “graphic novels” and “comics” from a combination of terms I most often hear librarians in my school district

(Anchorage School District) use. For them, “graphic” means picture, “novel” means story; so a graphic novel uses picture panels and dialog boxes. The pictures are an integral part in understanding the story. There are no boundaries to the length and genre of a graphic novel. Another way to define all the many different ideas of “comics” that come to our minds has been described by McCloud (1993) as, “juxtaposed pictorial and other images in deliberate sequence, intended to convey information and/or to produce an aesthetic response in the viewer (p. 9)”. For the purpose of this paper I will be using both of these definitions to define both “graphic novel” and “comic.”

### **Statement of Problem, Research Question**

The intellectual puzzle I wish to explore is similar to Mason’s comparative puzzle, which attempts to explain differences and similarities between x and y (O’Leary, 2014). My intellectual curiosity is to see how graphic novels, “the x,” can be used to teach similar comprehension skills and strategies instead of using trade picture books/anthologies, “the y.”

How to explore this intellectual puzzle calls for careful consideration of how the different roles teachers, students, and the aspects of reading graphic novels work together to build literacy knowledge, which I address in my research question. How can a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade elementary teacher use a graphic novel to improve students’ literacy knowledge? I define literacy knowledge as the ability to use printed and written works to function in society, and achieve the goal of developing one's comprehension of those printed and written works.

### **Rationale, Aims**

This project will be presented as a topic argument as described by Bogdan and Biklen rather than a thesis or theme, in that I set specific objectives in my methods to describe a particular aspect of a unit (2007). Bogdan and Biklen describe a topic argument as a certain topic being pervasive in the paper, but more as a unit of a particular aspect of what is researched rather than an idea about it. In this way it is more descriptive than conceptual (2007). The topic I want to focus on is the following: Now that graphic novels are accepted by educators as a valid format of literacy to teach language arts curriculum (Downey, 2009; Schwarz, 2006), what are practical ways teachers and students can use them, or are using them, in an elementary school environment? The practicality of this project, the intentional focus on one graphic novel, and the predetermined learning outcomes make it very descriptive rather than conceptual.

The validity of using graphic novels in the curriculum is seen throughout the United States in both research and practice. For example, Indiana high schools participated in a research project that showed reading graphic novels can improve overall academic achievement and reading comprehension (Downey, 2009). Literacy coaches in Texas advocate for the teaching of graphic novel conventions and illustrated how they can be used to teach traditional reading comprehension strategies (Schwarz, 2006). Finally, the New York City Department of Education in 2008 trained hundreds of educators on possible ways to support the use of graphic novels; this suggests the NYCDOE is convinced that using them is valuable.

The educational rationale for my master's project is supported by what type of research and materials are available to educators now, what is lacking, and when teachers

can (and should) implement graphic novels into schools. There has been an explosion of literature around how, why, and what the benefits of graphic novels used in secondary education (Chun, 2009; Danzak, 2011, Schwarz, 2006 & 2011), but less so in elementary education (Lapp, Wolsey, Fisher, & Frey, 2012). (I provide the summary of this literature in the forthcoming literature review.) This gap is what motivates my research question and project. Elementary students naturally rely on pictures when learning to read (Brown, 2013), and even more so in our multimodal media age of literacy. Multimodal literacy focuses on the design of discourse by investigating the contributions of specific semiotic resources, (e.g. language, gesture, images) co-deployed across various modalities (e.g. visual, aural, somatic), as well as their interaction and integration in constructing a coherent multimodal text (such as advertisements, posters, news report, websites, films) (Schwarz, 2006). Literature supports the idea that young learners in elementary, especially those that are struggling readers, can benefit from learning how to read graphic novels for more than just enjoyment (Gavigan, 2012) because the elements of graphic novels are read using the same comprehension skills that are used for other written text, which may be too advanced for some learners. Elementary educators should try to use graphic novels as an intervention tool to teach general reading comprehension skills, vocabulary, and story elements. The visual aspects in comics support the connections children have today with computers, television, etc. already (Bucher & Manning, 2004; Yang, 2008). Also, the specific set up of the graphic novel supports common themes and elements found in any written work (Chase, 2014) such as text structure, setting, transitions, plot, and author's purpose. This is one reason that using comics to teach reading would benefit so many young learners. Yet very few

studies have been done on this, and few materials are available to, this population of learners who could greatly benefit from learning literacy through the graphic novel medium. Therefore, my research question propelled me to create a curriculum, not collect students' data for analysis.

Although there is an educational need for this type of project, my true interest in pursuing this as my master project is more personal, and has slowly developed over the past four years. Throughout my time in UAF's Master of Education program I have been introduced and exposed to some of the different theories and research that is going on in the field of education such as second language acquisition methods, curriculum planning processes, and have been applying different literacy approaches to teach reading.

Originally, I was interested in exploring how social play vs. media play effects the language development in children (Wolfe, & Flewitt, 2010). In this day and age, children have less imaginative play with peers and spend more time alone in front of electronics for entertainment. I was interested to see if this had a damaging effect on oral language development and the ability to articulate one's own thoughts aloud (Bittman, Rutherford, Brown, & Unsworth, 2011). As I researched this topic, I came to realize that I was too biased against the way technology is used by the majority of children today to believe I came to believe I could not conduct a balanced thesis project around this topic without leaning too heavily on my own negative beliefs on the topic.

Instead I decided to take a more positive, creative and constructive approach to multi-modality in literacy through the topic of graphic novels. In my own life, from the people I have met, to the forms of media I am starting to seek out, I became very interested in the complexities of this form of literacy, and the attraction it has for many

different generations and types of learners across the globe. I feel this is a more generative topic, where I can explore how the use of this literacy complements the techno- and image-driven age children grow up in today.

The work I have done in past courses in this program has helped me develop the direction in which I took this project. I have done an individual case study on a student's language development using the school's language arts curriculum. This helped me view a reading curriculum with a more critical eye so that I could create my own reading lessons using second language learning strategies and graphic novels. My students' motivation and progress in these lessons inspired me to conduct a survey about graphic novels usefulness in Anchorage elementary schools. I also held an unstructured graphic novel book club for a few of my 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students to observe their literacy comprehension process without formal lessons so that I may evaluate what elements of graphic novels and what comprehension skills students naturally struggle with. My aim for this project was to finally apply all that I have learned, observed, gathered, and tried out to my own master's project: a project that allowed me the opportunity to constructively create a graphic novel curriculum with the goal that it may improve students' reading comprehension, strategies, and literacy knowledge. My wish is to provide a guide for other educator to use, not to collect data on the outcome in the students' learning. Instead, teachers themselves can determine the usefulness of my curriculum for the demographic of their students. Before I explain how all these pieces came together, one must understand the literature and theoretical framework that guides this project.

### **Literature Review**

This brief review of the literature will be organized in the following manner: First, I will review the reasons graphic novels are used as teaching materials in schools today. Second, I will explain the way literacy elements of graphic novels are expressed and read. Third, I will summarize examples of practical applications of graphic novels used in an elementary school setting. Finally, I will review the literature about teaching with graphic novels.

### **Reasons for Teaching with Comics**

Contemporary school-aged children are growing up with television, video games, and smart devices. Therefore, they are drawn to print media that contains the same visual impact and pared-down writing style, which could contribute to their enthusiasm for, and comfort with, graphic novels (Bucher & Manning, 2004). This is shown by the fact that sales of graphic novels have increased from \$75 million in 2001 to over \$1 billion in 2016. Even the estimable New York Times regularly reviews adult graphic novels, which is one way to index that the genre is taken seriously. Indeed, this form of print media may become the nation's new literature of choice (Yang, 2008).

Graphic novels can now be found in most school libraries and should be incorporated into the school curriculum for a few reasons: First, graphic novels may require students to use more complex cognitive skills than reading text alone, because readers decode more than words, and must also identify events between the visual sequences (Bucher & Manning, 2004). For example, if you only read the words in the comic and not look at the pictures, the plot will not make sense because the visual pictures and words are interdependent to each other. Secondly, any level of reader can

understand the complex comprehension of reading graphic novels because graphic novels have “visual permanence.” This means that when reading graphic novels it doesn’t matter how fast you chose to read it, the rate of information-transfer is in the reader’s control (Yang, 2008). On the other hand, the rate of information-transfer in text-based books do not provide as much comprehension control to students who struggle with fluency. Thirdly, graphic novels also provide students opportunities to be introduced to literature, subjects, or themes that they would have not otherwise encounter. For example, classic comic book superheroes can be compared to the heroic figures in classical mythology (Bucher & Manning, 2004). Many school districts are starting to implement and provide graphic novel-based lesson plans to K-12 teachers because of the benefits they can provide to students (Yang, 2008), but this has been a slow, uneven development throughout grade levels, and teachers’ own interest. Only 4% of teachers, grades fourth through twelfth, use graphic novels (Frey & Fisher, 2008). This is one reason why creating a teacher-friendly curriculum for graphic novels, to be used by any teacher regardless of their own understanding or interest of graphic novels, is needed.

### **How to Read the Elements of a Comic**

To make graphic novels useful as a medium in reading curriculums we need to look at how they are laid out, what the visuals communicate, and the different language art skills that are present. The following information from past literature explains these things.

First, one must learn the structural layout of comics, which is different than a picture book. Comics are read by understanding the space between the panels called “gutters.” These spaces require the reader “read between the pictures” by making a



comprehensive narrative from fragments using their own past experiences and understanding pictorial conventions. There are six common transitions that are communicated through the gutter space (Strum, 2013). Three of those are the most common types of transitions used in the gutters of comics (McCloud, 1993). The first, and most common transition type, is action-to-action. This features a single subject making distinct action progressions, and requires only a little closure from the reader. The second most common transition is subject-to subject. The subjects and point of views change but still stay within the same scene or idea. The reader's involvement in closure must increase to make these transitions meaningful to the story. The third most common gutter transition is scene-to-scene. Greater deductive reasoning and inferencing is needed because the transitions happen across a significant distance of time and/or space. All these transitions require the students to put decoding skills into reading and understanding without any words involved, but rather decode the gutters, so for ELL students who struggle with English they can learn this reading skill through visuals instead of words. By filling in gaps readers comprehend action, setting, changes in time, altered points of view, and characters' mood and feelings (Strum, 2013), all which are skills required to comprehend any book. The visuals within the panels provide even more language art reading skills to apply. There are five choices the authors' of graphic novels must make to provide the readers enough information to interpret the story (Seyfrid, 2008). Each of these choices parallel to a similar skill used when reading text, and can be used as an alternative method to teach these skills. There is the choice of moment, choice of frame, choice of image, choice of words, and choice of flow (Seyfrid, 2008). I go into much more detail about these individual choices in my curriculum to

provide the educator more thorough background information on these five graphic novel elements (see Appendix A-G). In general, graphic novels provide the reader with a multimodal literacy lesson, a literacy that is becoming so common and important to comprehend today.

### **Practical Elementary Applications of Comics**

Two recent research studies have applied the ideas discussed above to teach reading and writing to primary grade students with the use of graphic novels (Brown, 2013; Chase, Son & Steiner, 2014), and provided a framework for my own research by helping me determine the sequence and possibilities my curriculum could take. Sally Brown conducted a nine-week unit to examine the impact of graphic novels on the language and literacy skills of a small group of diverse students. I too, used a small group of students and planed for an eight-week unit to teach about the elements of graphic novels and how to use them to improve comprehension skills and strategies. Brown carried out her study in three phases: learning to read graphic novels, learning to write graphic novels, and creating multimodal compositions of written work as a means of assessing the students reading and writing skills.

In the first phase the students became familiar with the characters in two graphic novels, as well as mini lessons on frames and speech bubbles. In my curriculum the students became familiar with the common theme of a mystery box in each story, as well as have a week where the concentration was on frames (see Appendix A and B) or speech bubbles (see Appendix C). In the second phase Brown had students learned about drawing, story structure, elements of comics, revising and editing. In my curriculum students create work for each comic element choice, and create their own comic pages as

well (see Appendix G). The final phase of Brown's study had the students convert their paper-based comics into a digital version. Similarly my students were allowed to use the website [www.makebelivecomix.com](http://www.makebelivecomix.com) to create digital comics as a computer time choice. Throughout each phase the importance of students being active in the learning process, and conversations between students, were essential in developing their skills, as was true in my students work too. The results of this research showed that, "all of the graphic stories contained elements of characters, setting, and plot, which were not always included in their journal writing" (Brown, 2013, p. 216). Brown also concludes that five of the seven English learners were quiet and rarely participated actively in routine basal reader lessons, but became actively engaged during the nine-week unit, and central to the group's discussion on graphic novels (Brown, 2013).

The second study, by Chase, Son, and Steiner (2014) shows how it is possible for educators to teach a specific reading and writing Common Core State Standard (CCSS) to first and second graders using graphic novels. Their study was on the process they took to teach sequencing, and to see if the students proved proficient in that standard. In my curriculum I matched each objective to a CCSS as well, and used the graphic novel as a tool to achieve that. The study was carried out in six segments: teaching graphic novel features, putting frames in correct order (see Appendix A), creating scripts for visuals (see Appendix D and E), filling in speech bubbles (see Appendix C and G), retelling stories using panel format (see Appendix B), and creating their own story (see Appendix G) (Chase, Son & Steiner, 2014). Many of these activities were synthesized and adapted in my curriculum to be carried out as well. The primary grade lesson on sequencing with graphic novels proved to be successful, based on the students work that was evaluated

and the motivation of both students and teachers to continue to use graphic novels for learning and teaching literacy concepts (Chase, Son & Steiner, 2014). This article inspired me because it applied many graphic novel aspects from Strum and Seyfriend (2013, 2008), which was previously mentioned, on how to read this type of literature.

A professor of curriculum studies, Karen Gavigan writes, “Consequently the burning question for school librarians regarding graphic novels in schools is no longer, should I include graphic novels in my collection? But, how can I use graphic novels to increase student achievement?” (Gavigan, 2012). Her articles addresses many different ways graphic novels can be used in multiple grade levels, even though most are for grades five and above. Some of the ways Gavigan suggest the use of graphic novel is that graphic novels that are about a historical time, or scientific concept, makes those periods in history more alive and life like when viewed through greater visuals and those important historical people actually taking to the reader through speech bubbles. She also suggests that analyzing the visual elements of comic contribute to the meaning and tone of the text. Multiple types of learners, Gavigan claims, from ELL to struggling readers, have shown increased improvement because of graphic novels (2012).

This new question librarians ask, how can I use graphic novels to increase student achievement, is confirmed by looking at a survey given to elementary teachers asking their thoughts on graphic novels and their instructional value (Lapp, Wolsey, Fisher & Frey, 2012). The findings highlight the contrast between teachers’ perceived usefulness of graphic novels and their actual use, though. This is shown when 58% of teachers poled said they never use graphic novels with all students, yet 51% of those same teachers agree of their efficacy for those same students. The different opinions of usefulness are

also revealed between high school and elementary teachers. A majority of the elementary teachers rated the usefulness of graphic novels for different sub-group of students with no opinion, where as the high school teachers agreed more with their usefulness (Lapp, Wolsey, Fisher & Frey, 2012). This study suggest that there is not only the question of “how” to use graphic novels in elementary schools that needs to be explored, but also the reason “why” graphic novels are valid tools to teach language and literacy to younger students.

### **Literature that Assists Teachers to use Comics**

I found answers to these “why and how” questions in parent-friendly online guides and publications, as well as many books created for teachers to assist them in planning literature lessons around graphic novels. The “why” from most of the new literature I have read on this subject centers around the idea that graphic novels are a great medium to teach critical literacy, and the benefits of it being a multimodality format to empower 21 century learners (Brenner, 2015; Carter, 2007; Frey & Fisher, 2008; & Jafee, 2015). Critical literacy encourages readers to actively analyze texts and offers strategies for uncovering underlying messages of socially constructed concepts, such as power, inequality, and injustice. A multimodality format, as stated by Freire and Macedo (1987) says, “The contemporary view of literacy, then, is changing such that texts are no longer considered simply words on a page, but anything in the surrounding world of that literate person. The literate person is one who can “read” these various text, whether written or visual, one who can read the word and the world” (Cater, 2007, p.12). Readers need to excel at what Freire said in order to critically understand multiple formats from websites, to TV, to comics. The benefits students gain when reading graphic novels

critically, as a learning tool, reach far and wide. Those benefits include; attention to details, memory, sequencing skills, language usage, and critical thinking, all which increase for students when reading graphic novels (Jaffee, 2015). These skills are all gained when reading graphic novels because humans process visuals 6,000 times faster than text. The right hemisphere of the brain does this. Pair verbal cues and words, which are activated by the left hemisphere, and that dual coding can increase reading comprehension (Frey & Fisher, 2008). Therefore, a graphic novel invites the speed and fluidity of meaning making that prose writing does not. Graphic novels are read with both sides of the brain so it can reach multiple learners with different skills and abilities, and provide a way for teacher to foster an equalized collaborations in their students' learning (Carter, 2007). The collaboration happens when the same comic book can provide the visual clues needed for struggling readers, offer a different format of literature for the reluctant reader to become motivated, and provides an opportunity for advanced readers to actively engage in decoding the elements in sophisticated ways (Brenner, 2015). My curriculum was created for use across grade levels to support these ideas, and is illuminated in the reflections section.

I also have found many recommendations of “how” to make use of graphic novels in the classroom in new literature I found. The publications from Brenner (2015) and Jaffee (2015) confirmed what I have done in the curriculum on how to navigate graphic novels as a read aloud, particularly slowing down to “read the pictures” (see Appendix A and D). Both guides also mention the importance of understanding and studying the format of graphic novels, (panels, gutters, balloons, etc.) and how looking at graphic novels through those lenses allow for a unique format to teach literary comprehension

and creative writing. This is exactly what the goal of my curriculum tries to do, and is explained in full detail, under different week's background information, depending on the specific format and literary comprehension (see Appendix A-G). What is more encouraging is that as of 2011 the American Library Association added annual updates on Core Collection of Graphic Novels for kindergarten through eighth grade (Brenner, 2015). This means that my curriculum does not need to be bounded to just the *Explorer* book. Once teachers are familiar with teaching the format and elements of graphic novels, they may apply my lessons to their own book choices.

The teacher-directed books about using graphic novels led me to great ideas about how to take the knowledge from so many other educators and try to place it into one curriculum that would not be a daunting task for teachers who are just starting to implement graphic novels into their teaching. One of the most powerful insights I walked away from was James Bucky Carter (20017) who wrote, "With respect to reading, writing, and other accouterments of literacy, the more that an activity requires the students to engage in the kind of reading-writing-literacy behaviors that highly literate people use to address their needs, the more authentic the activity is judged to be" (p. 145). Therefore, it became important for me that for every weekly lesson students created an authentic piece of work as well, to solidify the learning objectives. In this way, students will become both consumers and producers of *their own* comics, which is an important tenet of New Literacy Studies (Street & Lefstein, 2007), which I explain more about in the theoretical framework section. Carter's description and process of having students create their own comics, as well as the case study done by the Bliz Comic Book

Club (Carter, 2007) in his book, guided the terms and similar process I use in my curriculum (see Appendix G).

Many of my questions about types of comics, how to first start using them, facts about their advantages in teaching, and how they may affect test results were answered when reading from *Teaching Visual Literacy*. Some of the new knowledge I gained was that manga, the Japanese art form of graphic novels, still fits under the umbrella term of “comic” and is not a separate entity. (Frey & Fisher, 2008). I also learned that nationwide only 4% of teachers grades fourth through twelfth use graphic novels so there are not a lot of studies done to determine their correlation to improved test score, but can show that motivation, and determination in students increases. That growth of loving to read propels students to read more and the natural outcome is to improve academically as well (Frey & Fisher, 2008). The book was useful in my ability to provide the correct background information for the different lessons. I also generated ideas on how to apply a puzzle activity for the choice of frames (Frey & Fisher, 2008) (see Appendix A).

Another great resource for me was the book by Steven Cary (2004) called *Going Graphic*. I have used his book a few times in different ways over the past years, and what I enjoy about this book is it allows teachers to teach with graphic novels through stand-alone lessons, not centered on a syllabus or a predetermined book. This book also allows for suggestions across grade levels and states that “comics that appear far above a student’s ability may be far more readable than expected, if the student is interested, is given prior knowledge about the content and the visual aid comprehension” (p. 58). This is why I believe I could create a curriculum that had the possibility of spanning multiple grade levels.



Finally, the most influential literature I came across was Scott McCloud's book, *Understanding Comics The Invisible Art* (1993). Even though this book is dated, it has been referenced in almost every article I have read, and still reads just as relevant today. As an educator I have a personal understanding of teaching standards, objectives, and comprehension skills, and strategies. My challenge was to relate all that to the style and element choices of comics. This book provided so much insight that I was able to summarize what I learned in the background information of my curriculum, in small parts that only pertained to each lesson (see Appendix A-G).

### **Theoretical Framework**

The topic of reading graphic novels to teach literacy, I argue, can be approached through these three theoretical frameworks: New Literacy Studies, Input Theories, Comprehensible Output Hypothesis.

#### **New Literacy Studies**

New Literacy Studies (NLS) is defined as literacy practices which include participants' cultural models of literacy events, social interactions of literacy events, text production and interpretation, ideologies, discourses, and institutions (Street & Lefstein, 2007). This theory acknowledges that the cognition and acquisition of literacy is culturally communicated, meaning you learn from active participation with peers, family, and community using cultural tools, such as relevant text, written activities, and visual symbols that pertain to one's individual culture (Brown, 2013; Street & Lefstine, 2007). In other words, NSL understands literacy as a deeply social, situated, dynamic, and ideological system of meaning making that acknowledges multiple modalities, genres,

dialects and other symbols systems that work together to create meaning within a community of belonging. It is not an autonomous, abstract system unhitched from people and cultures that everyone would “decode” exactly the same way.

Graphic novels for children are one type of cultural tool that can be used in the institution of a school. This in turns leads to the theory that being “literate” and having comprehension skills means more than just reading words, but also includes images that change rapidly and using multimodality literacy skills to interpret other form of “written communications” (Brown, 2013; Street & Lefstein, 2007). Graphic novels provide more than just words, by using juxtaposed pictures to rapidly communicate a meaning. In the past twenty-two years there has been a shift from print-based literacy to forms of more symbolic expression (Frey & Fisher, 2008). This happens when teacher expect students to be literate in the videos, podcast, websites, etc. (cultural tools) in order to have a discourse with their students about whatever topic is being communicated. NLS was originally inspired by “literacy events,” when a piece of writing becomes integral to the participants interactions of the interpretations process; and “literacy practices,” when social practices or interactions of reading and writing link them to a broader culture of some kind (Street, 2003). For example, by nature, graphic novels require a reader to participate in the interpretation of the story, so is always read as a “literacy event.” Same so for comics like anime or manga, those popular comics that have a cultural root in Japanese art (Frey & Fisher, 2008), so a reader participates in that “literacy practice” when they read those types of comics. Graphic novels are the widely accepted form of NLS that provide literacy events, social interactions, text production and interpretation, ideologies, and discourses, especially when used to truly teach students literacy, not just

to have students read them independently for entertainment, which is still the most common way graphic novels seem to be used in elementary school. Yet if a teacher uses the increasingly popular graphic novels as a way of “understanding children’s emerging experiences with literacy in their own cultural milieus to address educational questions about learning of literacy and of switching between literacy practices required in those different context (Street, 2003, p.83)” then NLS can be encouraged at school.

Critical Mutlimodal Literacies stem from NLS. Critical mutlimodal literacies can be labeled as a new form of literature in that it has three different perspectives unique to its own form, perceptual, structural, and ideological (Macky & Shane, 2013), all which share similar definitions of NLS. Kids are encountering these mutlimodal literacies through phones, TV, computers even before being exposed to print (Macky & Shane, 2013).

Phones, TVs, and computers all have a different form and structure but still require people to use text and symbols to communicate with them. Each holds a different perception and ideology to different people about what multimodal device is best used to communicate through literacy. For example, a professional may rely more on computer email to send a message to their coworkers, but use their phone to text a message to a family member. Teaching children to be critical readers of these mutlimodal literacies requires us to teach them the format and elements of them to comprehend, not just the content. This, in part, is what my curriculum attempts to do because graphic novel pages are similar to the frames, or sections that are used when navigating a phone, TV or computer.

### **Input**

Different language input theories also provide a framework for my research. Specifically, Krashen's Monitor Model and Total Physical Response (TPR) are used to provide input that helps build a construction of meaning.

Reading comics and graphic novels correctly is a new form of literature that, like a new language, may be picked up naturally over time or requires an expert to assist the students in gaining that knowledge sooner. Students will acquire that new knowledge when, comprehensible input is given to them and when their active filters are low enough to allow that input. This process is described in Krashen's Monitor Model, where learning functions as a monitor for the output, as opposed to acquisition, which is responsible for it (Sole, 1994). As well as his Input Hypothesis, that states, "we acquire more language only when we are exposed to comprehensible input that is a little beyond our current level of competence (Krashen, 1982)" and the Affective Filter Hypothesis where conditions must be optimal if students are going to learn. (Sole, 1994). My graphic novel curriculum provides both the expert assistance students need, as well as the positive motivation and novelty graphic novels provide to readers of all types that Cary suggest is needed in his book *Going Graphic* (2004). In the curriculum Total Physical Response (TPR) approach is used. James Asher, the creator of TPR, which is a language teaching method, believes that "the interaction between listening and body motion can enhance the comprehension and internalization of language input and facilitate long term retention" (Hwang, 2014, p. 434). The interactions between visual, auditory, and motor functions is important while learning new language skills because it allows new learners to fully express understanding when they may not have the confidence or ability to express understanding orally. In the TPR method students listen and perform what the teacher

models and directs (Er, 2013) through activities and games, (see Appendix F) which brings Gardner's multiple intelligence to the forefront of language acquisition in a meaningful context (Er, 2013). For example, kinesthetic children move to act out new vocabulary words, visual children take visual clues from flashcards, and auditory learners hear new vocabulary words in many different contexts. TPR is used in the curriculum to teach vocabulary (see Appendix F) because of the strong connections adjectives have to visuals, and verbs have to motor functions. TPR also increases learners' interaction with, and attention to, the language and literacy lessons because it is text dependent, enjoyable and interesting for students, and a bilateral activity (Er, 2013), which also hold true to reading comic books. Teaching students to read graphic novels in an academic setting with different construction of meaning approaches will not only activate student's individual meanings, but also show them how it can be validated in line with comprehension strategies used in all literature formats.

### **Comprehensible Output Hypothesis**

Language acquisition and comprehension theories also provide a framework for my research. Comprehensible Output Hypothesis is a theory of Merrill Swain (1998) that states that language learners need to deliver a comprehensible message in order for the learning to be validated beyond a semantic process to a syntactic process. Meaning the language becomes internalized and meaningful to comprehend, not just used by rote memorization or routine. Swain identified three possible functions of output: the noticing function, the hypothesis-testing function, and the metalinguistic function (Swain, 1998). Noticing is when, while attempting to produce the target language in an activity, the learner may notice that they do not know how to say or write the exact meaning they

wish to convey. Hypothesis-testing is when a learner plays with the wording of their output as a way of trying new ways to language their thoughts. Metalinguistic is when the learners use language to reflect on the target language activity to validate their final output (Swain, 2001). Graphic novels give opportunities for students to apply the three functions of output in the Comprehensible Output Hypothesis. The noticing function happens when students look at the five visual choices of frames, words, images, movement, and flow (Seyfrid, 2008) but cannot express with words what they see visually. The hypothesis-testing function is applied when students brainstorm and share possible outcomes and predictions for the gutter space between panels, as mentioned by Strum (2013), in order to help them better express orally what the readers see visually. The metalinguistic function is the final output given by the students when they collaboratively create their own interpretations of the story, as they did so often in the study by Brown (2013). The Output Hypothesis can also be achieved by highly motivated readers who self-scaffold their understanding by language their thoughts (Knouzi, Swain, Lapkin, & Brooks, 2010), or thinking aloud while vocalizing all three part of the Output Hypothesis. In the study done by Knouzi, Swain, Lapkin, & Brooks, (2010) students and teachers were encouraged to use terms like inferencing, elaborating, predicting, and rereading to describe positive ways students would self-scaffold for better understanding. This is also what my curriculum requires students to do because understanding, hence comprehension, stems from a combination of reading and languaging, reading alone is not enough (Knouzi, Swain, Lapkin, & Brooks, 2010). For instance, students may be able to read aloud all words correctly in a word only text but until comprehension questions are asked to that reader it is unknown if understanding is

present as well. Yet with graphic novels, and their dependence on the visual elements, require students to language their understanding in real time (see Appendix D). This is why implementing graphic novels as a read aloud is a powerful tool to teach comprehension.

Swain has also described language acquisition happening through situated learning and the output hypothesis based on a poststructuralist view of language (Swain & Deters, 2007). Situated learning happens when a novice is socialized through the use of language and their use of that language in special situations (Swain & Deters, 2007). Teaching literacy with a graphic novel creates that situation in an elementary classroom because at that age most readers are still novice learners of both literacy and elements of graphic novels. A key part of poststructural theory is that meaning is created, not fixed, through discourse (Swain & Deters, 2007). Reading graphic novels aloud is all done through discourse and therefore the meaning of the story is created differently in a group than for an independent reader. Each reader in the group is given the agency to change the meaning, or flow, of the comic when their discourse provides that new meaning for the whole group.

Finally, Swain's studies show that connecting language and content through collaborative tasks benefits learners (Swain, 1998; Swain, 2001; Swain & Deters, 2007), all these studies required an expert or novice interacting with the learner and content to advance the learners' language and literacy ability. This is why almost all of the student work was done in pairs, so that I could foster greater languaging to apply Swain's Comprehensible Output Hypothesis, and solidify comprehension when reading a graphic

novel. Practical examples of Swain's theories being applied to graphic novels during a read aloud can be found in the reflections section.

All of these theoretical ideas on language and literacy support my own epistemological beliefs about knowledge construction and meaning making, which I will explain next.

### **Statement of Bias**

My worldview stems from constructivism or relativism, I am a postmodern researcher. I feel very strongly that knowledge and truth is ambiguous, fluid, and relative (O'Leary, 2014). Throughout my masters project I relied on methodologies and methods that support this notion.

Constructivism means that you gain understanding by interpreting subject perceptions, and that the construction of these realities must depend on some form of a consensual language (Lincoln, Lynham, and Guba, 2011). Throughout a teacher's career they are continually building upon the realities that they create in their own classroom, such as the way I used graphic novels in this project. This is done through the use of creating that consensual language during a lesson, which in turn the children form their own understandings by interpreting these perceptions.

Relativism is defined as the view that there are no universals, and those things like truth, morals, and culture can only be understood in relation to their own socio-historic context (O'Leary, 2014). The visual, spatial, gestural, and other meanings found in graphic novels are read through the lens of the reader's own socio-historic context. One reader will construct the meaning of the panel's message differently than another reader



(relativism). Communicating and accepting their understanding of the graphic novel's story supports my constructivism worldview approach to learning literacy. Therefore, just choosing to explore the benefits graphic novel have in children's literacy one must have a postmodern view on what it means to read a story "correctly" because reading graphic novels is not defined by the author, but by the reader. Graphic novels require the reader to have power over the construction of the story (McCloud, 1993).

### **Methods**

This project drew upon the qualitative, constructivism methodologies of action research (O'Leary, 2014) and from a student participatory case study with a graphic novel reading group (Bogdan, and Biklen, 2007). This action research project continued the cyclical process of developing my own skills and practices as an educator that was mentioned in my rationale. The cyclical process included me as both the participant and researcher in the focus group in order to produce a quality curriculum that could be replicated by other teachers in the future. I achieved this cyclical process first by creating a curriculum to test out and reflect on. I then made changes to it based on my reflections of the curriculum being used to teach a group of students. Now I can share those changes that were made as my final curriculum project.

My qualitative methods were to conduct interviews similar to focus groups, and observations of that focus group. The focus group consisted of nine second-grade students in the comic book club during the school's "intervention" block; this "club" was during the day in the school-wide small group time. The interviews and observations were given as formal lessons and structured assignments. They consisted of topics

(lesson objectives) each week that I (as a participant) taught my readers to learn about and discuss through a primary graphic novel. I did not have any formal questions; rather, the discussions of the students were guided by the lesson objectives and the students' responses and interaction with the lesson. The data I collected from the focus groups' conversations, activities I observed, and students' work samples are presented in my reflections and drove the changes I made to my curriculum project. The curriculum I started with changed by the end of my research, because of the actions I took in order to make sure my thesis project question was addressed completely. Which asked, how can a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade elementary teacher use a graphic novel to improve students' literacy knowledge?

The population and setting for my project were 2nd grade students at the school I recently taught at, Alaska Native Cultural Charter School (ANCCS). ANCCS is a charter school that supports and provides learning strategies for families who wish to instill Alaska native values and culture in their children. Over 90% of the student population is Alaska Native, or partly Alaska Native. Over 90% of the families also qualify for free or reduced lunch, because they are labeled as "low socio-economically." Hence, ANCCS is also a Title I school that receives extra federal funds and materials, as long as we follow specified regulations set by Title I. Although not many students are labeled ELL (English Language Learners), most of the students have low CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency) because their BICS (Basic Interpersonal Communication Skill) is known as "Village English" (Baker, 2011). This 2<sup>nd</sup> grade focus group was the way I represented my belief that elementary education needs to make use of graphic novel curriculum. The CALP vs. BICS in my students represented the ELL and struggling

readers for whom graphic novel research already supports as summarized in the literature review. ANCCS set aside thirty minutes, four days a week, for intervention groups. Staff and students call this the “WIN” (What I Need) block. Students are split up into seven smaller groups within the grade level and work with seven different teachers on targeted skills that small subsets of students need to improve on. This past year, I and the other 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teacher focused on reading skills for our WIN groups. I used the “enrichment/high level readers” WIN group for my case study. This was a handpicked sample, based on my particular purpose and students that match my criteria, similar to a stratified sampling as described in O’Leary’s book (2014). Why I chose this group of 2<sup>nd</sup> graders for my case study are for the following three reasons.

First, during my mini-research project in ED 603 I discovered that the majority of students do not independently check out graphic novels from the school library until 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Since this “enrichment” group is my higher-level readers, they most closely match a typical 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reader. It is my hope that my final project can be used by more than just one grade level, and this reason helps support that as well. Teaching literacy with graphic novels can help younger students understand their complexity sooner, and then hopefully, they can be used in more primary grades.

The second reason had to do with the group size and cognitive ability of the students. When I create my curriculum project, the reading of graphic novels aloud in a group setting required a lot of communication and dialogue of students’ own metacognition, much in the same way Swain study on L2 output hypothesis supports the use of dialogue as an enhancement of mental processes (Swain, 1998). Therefore, I looked for a smaller

case study group, who had stronger CILP language skills, so that my curriculum guides teachers to the optimal objectives and outcomes for my final project.

The final reason is simply because this is an action research methodology, whereby the real life situations of working with constraints that are set by Title I, Anchorage School District, and ANCCS, limit who my participants can be.

The graphic novel I used in the book club is *Explorers: The Mystery Boxes*, edited by Kazu Kibuishi (2011). I chose this graphic novel because it is comprised of seven different graphic stories, all created by different authors. This makes it a great book to use as an introduction to teaching with graphic novels because it naturally provides different ways graphic novels can make use of layout, artwork, and words. Non-graphic novel readers often confuse comics, graphic novels, and manga as different books even though they all fit under the same umbrella of “juxtaposed pictorial and other images in deliberate sequence” (McCloud, 1993). *Explorers* clarifies that myth to educators. This book’s structure also helped me structure my own curriculum, where each story focused on one element of graphic novels and relating that to a specific literacy comprehension skills and strategy. I created and taught individual literacy lessons that used graphic novels in the past, and watched other 2<sup>nd</sup> graders read and discuss with each other graphic novels without any teacher input. Therefore, I had a general idea of what direction I would take this curriculum project. Implementing my choices was the first step in my action research method. This first step I looked at each grade level Common Core State Standards (CCSS) of College and Career Readiness (CCR) and matched the standard with a corresponding comprehension skill and strategy. Then I decided which of the five graphic novel elements as described by Seyfrid, (2008) and McCloud (1993) would best

model the standard and comprehension skills/strategies. Once I had all those components placed in a working format, I looked at each individual comic in the graphic novel to pick which story best represented a specific graphic novel element. This way each story would have a specific focus for all the different learning objectives. Finally, I set up the lessons in order of what I believed were the most important element to understand in order to comprehend the plot in a graphic novel. The final lesson looks at the choice of flow, which acts as a review of previous elements by looking at the interactions the elements have on each other. I did not read the book in order, but this did not bother the students. In fact, we would pass comics that they were interested in and then would be excited and hopeful for that comic to be used the following week.

Below are tables that show the weekly flow for this curriculum project, including standards, objectives, and basic day-by-day lessons:

### **Graphic Novel Book Club Unit**

| <b>ELA Anchor Standards: College and Career Readiness for Reading*</b> | <b>Reading Comprehension Skills: What you want to be able to do</b> | <b>Reading Comprehension Strategies: How to achieve a skill</b> | <b>Graphic Novel Element</b>                             | <b>Explorer Story</b>            |
|--|---|---|--|----------------------------------|
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.3, 5  | Sequence Events   | Understand Text Structure                                       | Choice of Frame  | Whatzit, Lesson 1                |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1, 3, 5                                       | Cause and Effect  | Make Inferences   | Use of Gutters/Choice of Frames (3 Types of Transitions) | Under the Floorboards, Lesson 2  |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2, 3, 4, 5                                    | Describe Plot/Story Structure                                       | Understand Text Structure                                       | Choice of Words (Speech Bubble Types)                    | The Soldier's Daughter, Lesson 3 |

|                                  |   |                  |                               |                                 |
|----------------------------------|---|------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
|                                  |   |                  |                               |                                 |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1, 5, 6 | Determine Author's Purpose/Identify the Point of View | Make Inferences  | Choice of Image               | The Butter Thief, Lesson 4      |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1, 3    | Make Predictions                                      | Ask Questions    | Choice of Movement            | Spring Cleaning, Lesson 5       |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.4, 5    | Describe Figurative Language                          | Visualize        | Choice of Words (Vocab Based) | The Keeper's Treasure, Lesson 6 |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2, 5    | Summarize   | Make Connections | Choice of Flow                | The Escape Option, Lesson 7     |

### **Weekly Flow**

| <b>Day</b>    | <b>Objective</b>  |
|---------------|---|
| 1<br>(I do)   | Teacher reads aloud the graphic novel story to students. Model the desired reading comprehension skill/strategies while pointing out the specific graphic novel element that allows for those comprehension skill/strategies to be used.  |
| 2<br>(We do)  | Lesson/activity that teaches students how to look at the specific graphic novel element so they can understand the story more. The lesson builds the specific comprehension skill/strategies knowledge for the students.  |
| 3<br>(We do)  | Continuation of the lesson/activity from day 2.   |
| 4<br>(You do) | Students collaboratively re-read aloud the graphic novel story to the group. Teacher guides them to use the desired reading comprehension skill/strategies while pointing out the specific graphic novel element that allows for those comprehension skill/strategies to be used. |

\*These are the CCSS I'll be using to show how this graphic novel unit can be used across the grade levels (1-6).

\*The K-12 standards define what students should understand and be able to do by the end of each grade. They correspond to the College and Career Readiness (CCR) anchor standards below by number. The CCR and grade-specific standards are necessary complements—the former providing broad standards, the latter providing additional specificity—that together define the skills and understandings that all students must demonstrate.

*Links to Standards in this strand:*

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1](#)

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.3](#)

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.5](#)

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2](#)

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.4](#)

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.6](#)

### **Limitations and Outcomes**

The limitations of this project were the hand-picked sample size, and time constraints set by the school where I was employed. I hope that when I described the setting, population of participants, and the criteria for choosing them, this was clear.

My final project is construed in three different parts. The first is the introduction to the graphic novel book club unit and weekly flow of each lesson for my curriculum. I present this to teachers in order to quickly show the main standards, objectives, and daily lessons of the curriculum. This will be the first thing educators will see to determine if this mini-curriculum interests them in offering a different way to teach literacy. The bulk of the project is the actual curriculum I created, in the form of a detailed teacher's manual. This is where I was able to express my project question in a cohesive manner that cumulates the action research method I used to design, test, and change my original understandings of my project question. How elementary teachers, and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students contribute their influence and abilities in reading a graphic novel; when the goal is to use this form of literature as a curriculum to improve students' reading comprehension, strategies, and literacy knowledge? The final piece of my project includes a few samples

of students work, as part of the curriculum for teachers, not as evaluated data. This provides teachers a visual understanding of what children could produce while teaching literacy through this form of literature.

Outside of the limitation and flaws I already mentioned, I did have a couple of anticipated problems for this research project. Both were typical problems at ANCCS that teachers learn to handle on a daily basis, defiant student behavior, and unreliable schedule changes.

I worked with some 2<sup>nd</sup> graders who were not in my typical classroom, so did not have the same routine and rapport I had with students in my daily class to manage that defiant behavior. In general, though, this never became an issue: the issue was more managing off-task behavior. I spent the first two weeks having our new group practice our WIN routines and learn my expectations when working together in our small groups. Motivation, for the most part, was high so engagement was natural. A few times I would need distracted students sit next to me and share my book so that they would stay on task, or pair them with students who they would work with on writing assignments more sincerely.

Unreliable schedule changes happened because the WIN time relied on seven different teachers' dependability. When one teacher was unavailable it fell on me, as the classroom teacher, to unexpectedly take on more groups or students than originally planned. This anticipated problem happened almost every week. I handled each situation, differently. Sometimes I could have two groups working on different things, and continue with my graphic novel lessons as planned, yet monitor both activities. Other times the extra students needed to only go on computer programs so that I could



fully focus on my WIN group. A few times I had to give up my graphic novel lesson for that day, so some weekly lessons took longer than my originally planned week. For these reasons the final project students create at the end of lesson seven never got completed before the end of the year. I have the teacher's written plans for that in the teacher's manual, but no student work to show for it. In general, though, the problems I ran into were unsurprising and easy to handle.

### **Reflections**

I had many moments in the past nine weeks of teaching this unit that helped me realize, learn, and take away new understandings of what it means to teach with graphic novels. Most of the insights I had in each weekly lesson are expressed in the teacher manual by way of revising the original plan when something new was tried in order to address a problem in the lesson, or as different tips I suggest throughout the daily lessons. Here, I reflect on each week individually to summarize a few final thoughts for each section of the curriculum from my personal views as an educator and graduate student, as well as some expressed moments the students shared or I observed.

#### **Lesson 1: Whatzits**

The first week my students and I read "Whatzits" with the goal of sequencing the events in a story by understanding the text structure when looking at the choice of frames in a graphic novel. This week was a great start to the unit, because the students were very excited and surprised that they would get to spend their WIN time reading comic books with me! Every day that week, after our thirty minutes was up, one student or another would comment that they didn't want to stop and how fast that time went. I

was excited to continue this unit with them and felt I was on the right track. This supports all the research comic can have on motivating all types of readers (Brenner, 2015; Bucher & Manning, 2004; Gavigan, 2012; Yang, 2008). The biggest struggle I saw in my students was their ability to confidently read aloud the pages in the graphic novel. Most were only reading the words and not explaining the pictures. Some would even just reading the words from left-to-right like a prose book, with no focus on the frame sequencing. This is exactly what the publication from Brenner (2015) and Jafee (2015) warn about. Therefore, I was very glad that my choice of frame lesson came first as students actually needed to be taught how to do this. Modeling the correct read aloud of the graphic novel at the beginning of each week also helped the students, as they got more confident and creative each day in their own readings. In fact, rereading this comic with new students showed me details that I had never realized or read before, even though I have read this graphic novel over four times. This is a case in point to Yang's idea that the information-transfer is in the reader's control (2008). Another indication that graphic novels are so enriched with literacy components, and can be used in multiple ways! My final reflection for week one is to explain my choice to use the particular student work sample that is found in the curriculum. This particular student chose a comic different than the teacher's example and also added a middle section to the sequence. Both of these make the assignment more challenging and individualized. The extra frames that are added show how to incorporate details from past and forthcoming frames and the sequence show a master of the weekly objectives (McCloud, 1993).

**Lesson 2: Under the Floorboards**

The second week my students and I read “Under the Floorboards” with the goal of understanding the cause and effects by making inferences when looking at the use of gutter transitions in a graphic novel (Strum, 3013). The excitement for our WIN lesson continued this week. It was the same week as the school’s book fair; a few students shared with me that they had just bought their first own graphic novel that week too. The central theme of *Explorers: The Mystery Boxes* is that each comic has an unknown box that drives the characters to figure out its mystery. Each story is fun, mysterious, imaginative, or a little frightening. The week’s comic is the most frightening one in the book, so I didn’t know how the second graders would react. In general, they were more excited to figure out the “mystery box” connection in this story compared to the first week. Comments about the story being “creepy” were validated and respected by all peers, but reading the graphic novel with the analytical purpose of studying the gutters helped the students not dwell on the “creepy” aspect. The way this incident played out shows how I was able to facilitate the construction of meaning approach (Baker, 2011). Analytically, these second graders had the most confusion finding and making subject-to-subject transitions. They also commented that the subject-to-subject transition make readers need to guess more, but make the story more interesting, much like McCloud states (1993). The students loved creating their “Making Inferences with Gutters” booklets. I had to make an extra copy of one student’s booklet and give her extra blank booklets because she was so disappointed I was keeping hers for the student sample section of my project! My final reflection for week two is to explain my choices to use the particular student work samples that are found in the curriculum. I first chose one student’s sample of action-to action and subject-to-subject transitions. I liked they way

she showed making a sandwich in the two different ways correctly. She even added to the pages by pretending the second page was the next day in her story. This makes her work both as a consumer of new knowledge and a producer of her own meaning, which is the goal of NLS (Brown, 2013; Street & Lefstein, 2007). The student who did a great example of scene-to-scene shows both time and place changes and naturally included narration boxes in his comic, which is one of the elements the next week lessons will include (Seyfrid, 2008).

### **Lesson 3: The Soldiers Daughter**

The third week my students and I read “The Soldiers Daughter” with the goal of describing the plot and story structure by understanding the text structure, when looking at the choice of word bubble types in a graphic novel. This was one of my more complicated weeks, which was surprising to me because many of my ideas for this lesson came the successful study I mentioned by Chase, Son, and Steiner (2014). I could be that after the first day of introducing the new objectives and read aloud Anchorage schools had a snow day, so jumping back into the lesson after that was difficult on the students as well as me. This same week I never had just my WIN group in the room but other students whose WIN teachers were unavailable. I think this in part contributed to the students reading aloud with extra word bubble practice was more difficult and took longer than expected. Even though their read aloud of “The Soldiers Daughter” did not go as well, I still have great samples of student’s work. I think this is in part because pairing them up to dialogue their thoughts with peers helped them test their hypothesis on using word bubbles better, which applied the Comprehensible Output Hypothesis (Swain, 1998). The students naturally shared individually written comic with others too. The

paired and independent word bubble sample show a master of the weekly objectives (Monnin, 2013), and both use words in a way that create a comedic element to the visuals in the frames. This shows great interdependence between the words and pictures (McCloud, 1993).

#### **Lesson 4: The Butter Thief**

The fourth week we read “The Butter Thief” with the goal of determining the author’s purpose and identify the point of view by making inferences when looking at the choice of images in a graphic novel. One of the most inspiring things that happened this week was the use of my poster that states the weekly objectives helped my student make new connections to the elements and how they relate to comprehension (Brown, 2013; Carter, 2007). After introducing these objectives my students naturally brought up what they thought the author’s purpose was for “Under the Floorboards” and “Whatzits.” They realized the dark gutters in the former helped us know the author wanted us to feel frightened by the clay doll, but the bright colors used in the latter made the space monster seem like a funny character (Sturm, 2013). Having this poster up throughout the whole unit made for a great re-teaching tool. I debated whether I should have taught the scripting of the wordless comic (day 3) as the second day lesson, and have the student do the note taking lesson (day 2) the following third day instead. The scripting lesson when so well, from the fishbowl modeling, the final sentences I received from pairs. Again this supports the Comprehensible Output Hypothesis (Swain, 1998), which guided me to make sure students’ work was done orally and written in pairs. My hesitation is that doing that lesson on day 2 would take away too much of the focused on the use of the *Explorer* book. My final reflection for week four is to explain my choice to use the

particular student work sample that is found in the curriculum. I chose to show this “Images and Pictures Detective Work” worksheet, because this student naturally made use of the pervious lesson on frames. She labeled both page and frames her details came from. The “Scripting Images and Pictures” worksheet I share shows a master of the weekly objectives (Monnin, 2013).

### **Lesson 5: Spring Cleaning**

Our fifth week we read “Spring Cleaning” with a goal to make predictions by asking questions when looking at the choice of movement in a graphic novel. My favorite thing about this lesson, on this week, is that it is the last of the graphic novel elements (aside from flow) that is taught. Therefore I noticed that within my teacher manual, and student work, many of the previous taught element choices were referenced or used. This confirms that all my weekly objectives, and the order I chose to teach them, actually were able to build upon each other. This is because all five graphic novel element choices are always being used by the creator and reader to build or comprehend the story (Brenner, 2015). I also noticed that all nine of my students became so much better at reading aloud the graphic novel in class, because the combination of reading and lauguaging was showing benefits (Knouzi, Swain, Lapkin, & Brooks, 2010). Enough oral practiced had happened, and taking the time to look at each element week by week, provided all readers with the tools they needed to confidently read the pictures and words in a way that told a story (Cary, 2004). My final reflection for this week is to explain my choice to use the particular student work samples that are found in the curriculum. I chose two students who both made a prediction that made sense to the story line based on the pervious and next frames, one that didn’t match the hidden panel, one that did. They both read aloud

very well though, so this shows that the questions they are asking are helping them make valid predictions. I also included the same students' written notes on the "Choice of Movement" worksheets to show possible ways the mastery of the weekly objectives can be met (Monnin, 2013). They used a combination of words, sketches, and blanks (no movement lines).

### **Lesson 6: The Keeper's Treasure**

The sixth week my students and I read "The Keeper's Treasure" with a goal to describe figurative language by visualizing when looking at the choice of vocabulary words used in a graphic novel." While teaching my small group this lesson I realized a few things about using comic books as literary teaching materials and the use of TPR in language development. I think using graphic novels in a small group setting would be better than whole class, which is what the publications from Brenner (2015) and Jafee (2015) suggest as well. There were many times someone else wanted to share a part of the story that wasn't "read" by the reader, so it took us a long time to get through the details of the story (McCloud, 1993; Yaung, 2008). This was only with nine students, with a class of 20 or more would be even harder to smoothly read, without losing focus of the pace, storyline, or objective. The TPR activities were very engaging, I was often able to expand on them, or repeat them, and all students were engaged and watching each other's actions for correct clues and new ideas. I felt that doing TPR in a small group was not the best environment for the students to fully express their actions. Since other reading groups were working, and concentrating, on different activities, my groups' actions had to be done in less dramatic ways than I would have asked for otherwise, especially on the last day of acting out parts of the book. I saw TPR work as a learning,

and teaching, tool in a number of situations. All my students were very confused on “grant a wish” being different than “wishing.” Once we acted it out, looked at the all-powerful genie, and saw what the character got, the meaning of “granting a wish” was much more developed in later TPR activities. The enriched word like “endless labyrinth” or “glacial wasteland” were expanded on in student’s own “reading” of the comic book. Again this supports Baker’s (2011) and Cary’s (2004) theories about the importance of communicative language teaching and the role of the educator.

### **Lesson 7: The Escape Option**

Our final story, and last few weeks, we read “The Escape Option” with the goal of summarizing by making connections when looking at the choice of flow, or all graphic element choices, working together, in a graphic novel.” This lesson was taught during the last three weeks of school mixed in with ANCCS’s Culture Week, Field Day, and End-of-the-Year activities. Needless to say I did not see the WIN group consistently enough to get through all eight days of lessons. The student and I completed the first four days, including the cumulating activity of recreating a page, and started the prewriting/drafting activities of creating their own comic ending (Cary, 2004). The student sample I chose to include was from the pair of students who most creatively, and neatly applied all previously taught lessons on graphic novel elements. The dialogue between the students while prewriting their endings were great, and I wished I had their own comic to share. One thing that made the dialog more enriching and helpful to the students was that I had them sit at tables with students who voted for the same main idea to the ending. That way their discussions while brainstorming would benefit the choice of flow in their own comic (Swain, 2001). My final reflection on this week, and on the



unit overall, is how excited I am to use this same curriculum next year in Thailand with my fifth grade class! I will get to re-teach all these lessons again, but with older elementary students, and see if this curriculum is truly transferrable across the different grade levels, cultures, and languages like I envision!

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion of my master's project I experienced how the different roles of a teacher, students, and the aspects of reading graphic novels work together to build literacy knowledge. The curriculum I created and used with my students successfully taught literacy comprehension in a new and motivating way that neither my students nor I had experienced before. This qualitative curriculum project is not meant to be for any empirical application of theory, because it is limited to the time, place, and participants. Nor did I analyze any data. However, my hope is that this practical application of using graphic novels to teach literacy, in elementary schools, has the possibility of being shared with teachers in my own school, school district, or other educators who seek out an alternative to teach literacy for their students. The title for this curriculum is *Teaching Literacy Skills with Graphic Novels to Elementary Students*.

### References

- Baker, C. (2011). *Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*. Tonawanda, NY: Multilingual Matters.
- Bittman, M., Rutherford, L., Brown, J., & Unsworth, L. (2011). Digital natives? New and old media and children's outcomes. *Australian Journal Of Education (ACER Press)*, 55(2), 161-175.
- Bogdan, R. & Biklin, S.K. (2007). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theories and methods* (5th ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Brenner, R. (2015, January). A guide to using graphic novels with children and teens. Retrieved February 4, 2017, from <https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/lesson-plans/teaching-content/guide-using-graphic-novels-children-and-teens/>.
- Brown, S. (2013). A blended approach to reading and writing graphic stories. *Reading Teacher*, 67(3), 208-219.
- Bucher, K. T., & Manning, M. L. (2004). Bringing graphic novels into a school's curriculum. *Clearing House*, 78(2), 67-72.
- Cary, S. (2004). *Going graphic: Comics at work in the multilingual classroom*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Chase, M., Son, E. H., & Steiner, S. (2014). Sequencing and graphic novels with primary-grade students. *Reading Teacher*, 67(6), 435-443.
- Chun, C. W. (2009). Critical literacies and graphic novels for english-language learners: Teaching maus. *Journal Of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 53(2), 144-153.
- Carter, J.B. (2007). *Building literacy connection with graphic novels: Page by page, panel by panel*. Illinois: NCTE.
- Danzak, R. L. (2011). Defining identities through multiliteracies: EL teens narrate their immigration experiences as graphic stories. *Journal Of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 55(3), 187-196. doi:10.1002/JAAL.00024
- Downey, E. M. (2009). Graphic novels in curriculum and instructional collection. *American Library Association*, 49(2), 181-188.
- English language arts standards: Anchor standards: College and career readiness anchor standards for reading. (2017). Common Core State Standards Initiative. Retrieved February 18, 2017 from, <http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/CCRA/R/>.

- Er, S. (2013). Using total physical response method in early childhood foreign language teaching environments. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Science*, 93 (2013), 1766-1768.
- Frey, N. & Fisher, D. (2008). *Teaching Visual Literacy*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Fowler, F.J. (2014). *Survey research methods (5<sup>th</sup> ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Gavigan, K. (2012). Sequentially smART--using graphic novels across the K-12 curriculum. *Teacher Librarian*, 39(5), 20-25.
- Hwang, W.-Y., Shih, T. K., Yeh, S.-C., Chou, K.-C., Ma, Z.-H., & Sommoool, W. (2014). Recognition-based physical response to facilitate EFL learning. *Educational Technology & Society*, 17 (4), 432-445.
- Jaffe, M. (2015). Raising a reader: How comics and graphic novels can help your kids love to read. Retrieved January 25, 2017 from, <http://cbldf.org/resources/raising-a-reader/>.
- Kibuishi, K. (2011). *Explorer: The mystery boxes*. New York: ABRAMS.
- Knouzi, I., Swain, M., Lapkin, S. & Brooks, L. (2010). Self-scaffolding mediated by languaging: Microgenetic analysis of high and low performers. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 20 (1), 23-49.
- Krashen, S. (1982). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition*. New York: Pergamon Press.
- Kumaravadivelu, B. (2003). *Beyond Methods: Macrostrategies for Language Teaching*. Yale University Press.
- Labio, C. (2011). What's in a name? The academic study of comics and the "graphic novel". *Cinema Journal*, 50(3), 123-126.
- Lapp, D., Wolsey, T. D., Fisher, D., & Frey, N. (2012). Graphic novels: What elementary teachers think about their instructional value. *Journal Of Education*, 192(1), 23-35.
- Lincoln, Y. S., Lynham, S. A., & Guba, E. G. (2011). Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions, and emerging confluences, revisited. *The Sage handbook of qualitative research*, 4, 97-128.
- Mackey, M., & Shane, M. (2013). Critical multimodal literacies. *International handbook of research on children's literacy, learning, and culture*, 15-27.

- McCloud, S. (1993). *Understanding comics the indivisible art*. New York: Harper Collins.
- Monnin, K. (2013). Aligning graphic novels to the common core standards. *Knowledge Quest*, 41(3), 50-56.
- O'Leary, Z. (2014). *The essential guide to doing your research project* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Saldaña, J. (2009). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. Sage.
- Schwarz, G. (2006). Expanding literacies through graphic novels. *English Journal*, 95(6), 58-64.
- Schwarz, G. (2010). Graphic novels: New sites of possibility in the secondary education. *Curriculum & Teaching Dialogue*, 12(1/2), 43-65.
- Seyfried, J. (2008). Graphic Novels as Educational Heavyweights. *Knowledge Quest*, 36(3), 44-48.
- Sole, Y. R. (1994). The Input Hypothesis and the Bilingual Learner. *Bilingual Review*, 19(2), 99-110.
- Street, B. (2003). What's 'new' in New Literacy Studies? Critical approaches to literacy in theory and practice. *Comparative Education*, 5(2), 77-91.
- Street, B. V. & Lefstein, A. (Eds.). (2007). *Literacy: An advanced resource book*. London: Routledge.
- Strum, B. W. (2013). Creativity in the space between. *Knowledge Quest*, 41(3), 58-63.
- Swain, M. (1998). Interaction and second language learning: Two adolescent French immersion students working together. *The Modern Language Journal*, 82, 320-337.
- Swain, M. (2001). Integrating language and content teaching through collaborative asks. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 58(1), 44.
- Swain, M. & Deters, P. (2007). New mainstream SLA theory: Expanded and enriched. *The Modern Language Journal*, 91(5), 820-836.
- Wolfe, S., & Flewitt, R. (2010). New technologies, new multimodal literacy practices and young children's metacognitive development. *Cambridge Journal Of Education*, 40(4), 387-399.
- Yang, Gene. (2008). Graphic novels in the classroom. *Language Arts*, 85(3), 185-192.

## Appendix A

### Lesson 1: Whatzits

#### Objective:

*Sequence events (comprehension skill):* Students analyze how and why characters and events develop and interact over the course of a graphic novel, and place comic strips frames so that the sequence of events are in the correct order.

*Understand text structure (comprehension strategies):* Students analyze the structure of frames/panels in a graphic novel and comic strips to see how each frame relates to each other as a whole.

*Choice of Frame (graphic novel element):* Students interpret the correct order of frames on a comic page to read the story in the correct sequence. Students also discuss how the shape and size of the frame structure contributes to their understanding of the text.

#### Common Core State Standards:

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.3

Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.5

Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

**Background Information:**

This background information is for you, the teacher, to quickly get familiar with the basic theory behind the “choice of frame” in a graphic novel.

A graphic novel creator acts like a director when deciding what each panel and page layout shows. Readers should think about the frame of each panel. What are you seeing? What can’t you see? What about the “camera” angle, or sound effects? What does the distance from the subject in the frame tell you? Why did the creator make those choices (Brenner, 2015)? Many of these questions can be answered by knowing some facts about the details of frame choices.

Each frame indicates a division, or break, of time and space to progress the story forward. This is why frames work as a real time representation of past (panel previously read), present (new panel to read), and future (upcoming panel). Therefore the pace at which panels change, and how much time seems to pass, is a careful decision made by the creator (McCloud, 1993). Some of the common frame types indicate these changes in time and space. The longer the frame means the longer that moment takes place in the story (McCloud, 1993). This is why the subject will usually be smaller or surrounded with more details in these frames. The opposite can be said for small frames, which help the readers focus on one important detail quickly. There are ways creators express the idea of timelessness too (McCloud, 1993). A frame with no words allows the reader to decide how long to pause on that frame before continuing the story, and represents a sense of constant inner thought of the characters. Frames with no borderlines are called “bleeders.” This shows readers that whatever is happening inside these frames “escapes”

into an unidentified time within the plot line. This provides power to the reader to determine the time frame within that panel (Frey & Fisher, 2008).

Examples, or suggestions, of how and when to show students the “choice of frame” within the weekly graphic novel story are explained in more detail under the Day 1 lesson notes (Kibuishi, 2011).

**Materials:**

- Copies of Explorer: The Mystery Boxes, edited by Kazu Kibuishi (enough for pairs to share the book).
- Interactive poster of the weekly goal for students to focus and learn (see master copies for example/update)
- Cut up frames of “Cooperation Captions” comic strip (enough for pairs to share) placed in baggies
- Template for the correct “Cooperation Captions” frames (one for each pair)
- Cut up frames of “Foxtrot” comic strip and template for the correct frame layout placed in baggies
- Cut up frames of “Denise the Menace the Party’s Over” comic strip and template for the correct frame layout placed in baggies
- Cut up frames of “For Better or for Worse” comic strip and template for the correct frame layout placed in baggies
- Cut up frames of “Marvin” comic strip and template for the correct frame layout placed in a baggie
- Teacher example of “Mutts” Adding Frames to a Comic lesson



- [6 panel template](#) (one per student)
- [“Mutts” comic strips](#) examples (one per student)
- Class set of scissors, glue, and pencils
- Samples of [student created work](#) (use for teacher’s reference)

**Daily Lessons:**Day 1:

Introduce the new graphic novel book to students. Explain that Explorer: The Mystery Boxes has seven different short graphic stories and to read each story the class will practice using a comprehension skill, strategy and learning about an element all graphic novels have (Monnin, 2013). Use the poster to introduce this week’s objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, “I can sequence the events in a story by understanding the text structure when looking at the choice of frames in a graphic novel.”

Read aloud the “Whatzits” (p. 94-109) to students. When reading a graphic novel as a read aloud make sure to read the words and pictures, explaining the sequence of the plot aloud. Also, point to each frame you are reading, and have students point to the same frame as they follow along. This will help them realize the correct order (sequence) of the frame layout (structure) on the page.

While reading aloud make sure to use the following example to teach about some of the common frame types and how they are structured to help the readers understand the sequence in a graphic novel. As a teacher use digression on which examples you want to point out, or others you notice yourself, based on your students’ comprehension level, your connection to the story, etc.



- P. 96, full page frame: A common way graphic novels will introduce the setting (spaceship in outer space) and leave visual clues for the next frame (same spaceship is seen on the first frame in p. 97).
- P. 97, frames go from big, to small, as the sequence unfolds: This slowly introduces the plot line and important characters in the story.
- P. 97, frames 2 and 3: Notice the word bubbles start in frame 2, but are coming from the character in frame 3. This is an example of a frame vs. time interaction. Both frames 2 and 3 are happening at the same time in the story sequence.
- P. 98, frame 5: This wide frame allows the reader's eyes time to pause and notice how momentous the task really is.
- P. 99, frame 1: Shows movement through time, the kid is in three different spots throughout that frame, not three different people.
- P. 99, frames 2-4: In frame 2 readers see the kid and the box, in frame 3 readers only see the kid, in frame 4 readers only see the box. These focused frames foreshadow the important connection between the kid and the box for the story's sequence.
- P. 101, frames 1-2: The sound WARGL is split between the two frames, also showing a frame vs. time interaction. The frame shape in frame 1 is larger on top to show us the kid is looking up at the creature, the same way frame 2 is larger on the bottom to show us the creature is looking down at the kid.
- P. 102, frame 5/6: The frame within a frame shows the readers in more detail the kids expression to what he/and the readers see happening in the larger

frame.

- P.103, circle shape frame template: These frames show cause and effect in the sequence of the story. Read the top frame first, to see what the kid needs to do. Read the circle frame second, what happened when he tried. Read the surrounding frames last, what the effect was from not catching on the planets.
- P. 105, frame 7: The bleeder frame at the bottom of the page shows that the running around and cleaning up is constant and timeless.
- P. 106, frame 6: This taller frame of the grandpa peering down at the kid (shown in 2 frames) expresses the age, size, and power difference between the characters.
- P. 108, frames 2-4: These frames go from wide to small rectangles, as well as 3, 2, 1 characters in each. This sequence help the readers pick out the “bully” of the little kid.

### Day 2:

Use the poster to review this week’s objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, “I can sequence the events in a story by understanding the text structure when looking at the choice of frames in a graphic novel.”

Pass out precut panels of the “Cooperation Caption” comics and frame outlines for pairs to put in sequence order. Do this as a whole group activity. Explain that the frame shape gives you clues to the correct order; you also need to look at the details inside the frames to make sure the sequence of the story makes sense (Frey & Fisher, 2008). Pass out new precut comic panels to put in sequence order. Do this in pairs, each pair works

on a different comic strip. Help pairs in their sequence reasoning by pointing out details of the frame to help figure out the correct sequence. Students share their reading of the comics to the group when all pairs have put their choice of frames in the correct structure.

- Tip: Have students number the correct frame order of the back of the precut frames. These “Comic Puzzles” can be used as a center activity, or independent practice in the future.
- Tip: The comics used in this lesson have a range of easiest to hardest to sequence; Foxtrot, For Better or for Worse, Denise the Menace, and finally, Marvin. Match comics to pairs that will match their ability in the task.
- Differentiated Tip: Upper grade levels have the choice of not using the frame outline page. For a greater challenge, fit all the frames on a blank page layout instead.

### Day 3:

Use the poster to review this week’s objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, “I can sequence the events in a story by understanding the text structure when looking at the choice of frames in a graphic novel.”

Use the “Mutts” comics to add two other events in the sequence of the plot. See the “teacher example” for the final product of today’s lesson. Read the two Mutts comics with the students, have each student pick the one they thought was the funniest. This will be the comic they add their own frames to. Show student the teacher example for the lesson. Explain how you added a frame to the middle and end of the comic to tell more

about the story. Give students the task to add two extra frames in their comic to tell more about the beginning, middle, or end. Cut out the four frames, glue onto the 6 frames template. Students must understand the text structure to leave two of the frames blank in the correct place they want to add details to the story (Cary, 2004). Students draw their own beginning, middle, or end frames, and write a sentence underneath to describe what is happening.

Have students share with the group the places they added to the sequence of events in their comic (Cary, 2004). Make sure students' frames match within the correct sequence, and read from panel to the next panel in a way that makes sense. Help correct those that do not, and complement on story details of those that do.

- Differentiated Tip: Adding a frame at the very beginning and end is the easiest way students who are struggling with sequencing or structure will correctly learn this concept. More challenging is to add frames in the middle of the comic for more advanced students.

#### Day 4:

Use the poster to review this week's objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, "I can sequence the events in a story by understanding the text structure when looking at the choice of frames in a graphic novel."

Students re-read "Whatzits" aloud to the group. Have one student read 2 pages aloud at a time, while other students track the frames with their fingers. Use guiding questions to get students to share new details about frames they notice. You may also use the examples from Day 1 again to guide students to notice those common frame types,

and how they are structured to help the readers understand the sequence in the graphic novel (Kibuishi, 2011).

**Assessments:**

Day 2: (Formative) Students share their reading of the comic to the group when the pair has put the choice of frames in the correct structure.

Day 3: (Formative) Students share with the group the places they added to the sequence of events in their own comic. Students' frames must match within the correct sequence, and read from one panel to the next panel in a way that makes sense.

Day 4: (Summative) Students re-read two pages at a time from "Whatzits" aloud to the group. Use guiding questions to assess students' ability to correctly share new details about the choice of frames that they notice.

**Master Copies Index:**

Please refer to the links found in the Lesson 1 Materials section of the Teacher's Manual for all the master copies teachers will need to prep for the weekly lessons.

## Appendix B

### Lesson 2: Under the Floorboards

#### Objective:

*Cause and Effect (comprehension skill):* Students analyze why (cause) and how (effect) characters, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a graphic novel when expressing those changes they notice between the frames’ “gutters.”

*Making Inferences (comprehension strategies):* Students will closely read a graphic novel to determine what the “gutter” transitions are, and to make logical inferences about the story from it.

*Use of Gutters (graphic novel element):* Students cite specific “gutter” transitions when writing and speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text. Analyze the structure of action-to action, subject-to-subject, and scene-to-scene transitions and how they relate to each other as a whole.

#### Common Core State Standards:

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1

Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.3

Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.5

Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

### **Background Information:**

This background information is for you, the teacher, to quickly get familiar with the basic theory behind the “choice of frame” in a graphic novel.

Comic creators use choice of frames in two ways. The frame choice itself, this is what was taught in Lesson 1. As well as the use of gutters, this is the space between the separate frames, and is what this lesson will concentrate on (Strum, 2013). The action in comics happen in the gutters, so gutters become the invisible art of graphic novel storytelling that the creator chooses to make. The readers must collaborate with the creator to “read” the visible and invisible, much like a dance between the two. In order to read the visible frames then the invisible gutters successfully, readers use closure (McCloud, 1993) .

Closure is when the readers observes only part of an image inside the frame, but believes that it is a representation of the whole (McCloud, 1993). For example if you look at the frame below: Readers make closure by understanding that the man’s arm is not in two parts but his elbow just can’t be seen in the frame; just like the rest of his body, he still has legs and feet that are below him. We believe the whole person is there

but are only seeing the parts the comic creator chooses to show us.



When multiple frames are placed in sequence the readers become a willing and conscious collaborator to communicate the storyline, and closure is the agent of change, time, and motion (McCloud, 1993). The transitions of change, time and motion in comics happen within the gutters, requires readers to see cause and effects of each panel, and make inferences about the action in the gutter space.

Most panel-to-panel transitions in comics can be placed in several categories; all require a different level of closure from the readers (Strum, 2013). This lesson will focus on the three most common types of transitions found in the gutters of comics (McCloud, 1993). The first, and most common transition type, is action-to-action. This features a single subject- making distinct action progressions, and requires only a little closure from the reader (see Action-to-Action Samples in master copies for visual examples). The second most common transition is subject-to subject. The subjects and point of views change but still stay within the same scene or idea (see Subject-to-Subject Samples in master copies for visual examples). The reader's involvement in closure must increase to make these transitions meaningful to the story. The third most common gutter transition is scene-to-scene (see Scene-to-Scene Samples in master copies for visual examples).



Greater deductive reasoning and inferencing is needed because the transitions happen across a significant distance of time and/or space.

Comic creator Scott McCloud explains gutters wonderfully, “Within frames of a comic information is only conveyed visually, but *BETWEEN* the frames none of our senses are required at all, which is why *ALL* of our senses can be engaged!” (Scott McCloud, P.89)

**Materials:**

- Copies of [Explorer: The Mystery Boxes](#), edited by Kazu Kibuishi (enough for pairs to share the book).
- [Interactive poster](#) of the weekly goal for students to focus and learn (see master copies for example/update)
- [Making Inferences with Gutter Booklet](#) (enough for each student, use the template to create, cover page and 3 blank frame pages)
- [Action-to-Action Samples](#) (use on day 2)
- Action-to-Action [Teacher Example](#) (use on day 2)
- [Subject-to-Subject Samples](#) (use on day 3)
- Subject-to-Subject [Teacher Example](#) (use on day 3)
- [Scene-to-Scene Samples](#) (use on day 4)
- Scene-to-Scene [Teacher Example](#) (use on day 4)
- Samples of [student created work](#) (use for teacher’s reference)

**Daily Lessons:**

Day 1:

Use the poster to introduce this week's objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, "I can understand the cause and effects by making inferences when looking at the use of gutter transitions in a graphic novel."

- Tip: Teach that the word inferences means "guesses" and that reader's guesses are confirmed by the cause and effect between the two panels.

Read aloud "Under the Floorboards" (p.4-21) to students. When reading a graphic novel as a read aloud make sure to read the words and pictures, explaining the sequence of the plot aloud. Also, point to each frame you are reading, and have students point to the same frame as they follow along.

While reading aloud make sure to use the following examples to teach about the use of gutters. As a teacher use digression on which examples you want to point out, or others you notice yourself, based on your students comprehension level, your connection to the story, etc.

- P. 6-7: Before reading show students the black gutters between the frames and explain that when reading the pictures you will also be sharing guesses, or inferences, on what happened between the panels to tell the story in more detail today. Have students trace the gutters with their fingers to check for understanding of what gutters are.
- P. 6, frames 1-3: First we are outside looking at a house, then end up inside the house seeing a sleeping girl (this is an example of scene-to-scene change).
- P. 6-7, frames 3-6: The girl is asleep, then wakes up because she hears a

tapping sound under the bed. She looks under the bed and sees a floorboard that is sticking up. The girl gets out of bed and lifts up the floorboard to see what is hiding underneath it (this is an example of action-to-action transition).

- P. 7, last 3 frames: we see the girl reaching for the box and paper in the hole. The girl is reading what is on the paper. And we get to read the letter she read on the paper (this is an example of subject-to-subject closure).

Do not introduce the transition types to students today. Just read the graphic novel aloud so those students become familiar with the story, and model inferencing what actions (the cause and effect) are happening in the gutters too.

### Day 2:

Use the poster to review this week's objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, "I can understand the cause and effects by making inferences when looking at the use of gutter transitions in a graphic novel."

Introduce action-to-action gutter transitions. Use the Action-to-Action Samples in the master copies (McCloud, 1993). This can be displayed as a poster, handout, or on a doc-cam. Explain how each panel change features a single subject making distinct action progressions, and requires only a little inferencing from the reader.

➤ Tip: limit to 5 min.

Ask student to find, and describe, specific examples of action-to-action transitions in the gutter spaces between panels in this week's graphic novel story "Under the Floorboards." Here are some following examples to share with students at the beginning,

or places to suggest struggling students go to for more assistance (Kibuishi, 2011).

- P. 11, 12, and 14, gutter between frames 1&2: The girl's facial reactions to what is being said or done in the previous or proceeding frame.
- P. 18, gutter between frames 3-5: Shows the action of the clay doll become more lifelike by forming a mouth and speaking for the first time.
- P. 20, all gutters between the frames: First row shows the storm clearing, second row shows door knocks getting louder, last row shows the girl's reaction to changes in the door knocks.

- Tip: Limit to 10-15 min.
- Tip: Give students a few min. to silently find examples, and then require all students to share one idea to check for understanding of all students.
- Re-teaching Tip: When students share examples in the graphic novel have them count and say what frame number they want the group to look at; this will reinforce lesson 1 "Choice of Frame" objectives. Have all students in the group point to the same frame.

Pass out the Making Inferences with Gutter Booklet (see master copies) to each student. Students will create one 3-panel strip of action-to-action gutter transitions (Cray, 2004). Provide are 10 actions to illustrate from beginning, middle, and end; modify as needed for the demographic and age group of your students.

- |                       |                            |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Kick a goal        | 6. Pick up a phone ringing |
| 2. Make a sandwich    | 7. Lick an ice cream cone  |
| 3. Cross the street   | 8. Dress for winter recess |
| 4. Slide down a slide | 9. Build a Lego tower      |

## 5. Dig a hole

## 10. Airplane landing

See the Action-to-Action Teacher Example (master copies) of what the students' daily assessment should model. Monitor, assist, and check in with individual students that their own work follows the action-to-action transition. If it does not, point out that the subject never changes; just what they are doing changes in each panel (McCloud, 1993). Help them fix mistakes.

- Differentiation Tip: Teachers may either assign certain actions. This offers a greater challenge to students, and provides more examples to discuss and look at later.
- Differentiation Tip: Teachers let students choose their own action to illustrate. This allows the student to pick an action they can already relate to, and provides the opportunity to look at the same action from different viewpoints if multiple students chose the same action.
- Tip: Limit 15-20 min.

If time allows, either have students share with the whole group, or a partner, their 3-panel action-to-action sequence in order to practice reading aloud the gutters in comics.

Day 3:

Use the poster to review this week's objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, "I can understand the cause and effects by making inferences when looking at the use of gutter transitions in a graphic novel."

Introduce subject-to-subject gutter transitions. Use the Subject-to-Subject Samples in the master copies (McCloud, 1993). This can be displayed as a poster,

handout, or on a doc-cam. Explain how in each panel the subjects and point of views change, but still stay within the same scene or idea (Strum, 2013). The reader's involvement in inferencing must increase to make these transitions meaningful to the story.

➤ Tip: limit to 5 min.

Ask student to find, and describe, specific examples of subject-to-subject transitions in the gutter spaces between panels in this week's graphic novel story "Under the Floorboards." Here are some following examples to share with students at the beginning, or places to suggest struggling students go to for more assistance (Kibuishi, 2011).

- P. 10, all frames: Frames play between girl and wax doll showing the doll coming to life and the girl watch that happen.
- P. 12, all frames: Frames play between the girl's and wax doll's reaction to the chore of sweeping.

➤ Tip: Limit to 10-15 min.

➤ Tip: Give students a few min. to silently find examples, and then require all students to share one idea to check for understanding of all students.

➤ Re-teaching Tip: When students share examples in the graphic novel have them count and say what frame number they want the group to look at; this will reinforce lesson 1 "Choice of Frame" objectives. Have all students in the group point to the same frame.

Pass out the Making Inferences with Gutter Booklet (see master copies) to each student. Students will create one 3-panel strip of subject-to-subject gutter transitions

(Cray, 2004). Provide are the same 10 actions from day 2 to illustrate from beginning, middle, and end; modify as needed for the demographic and age group of your students.

- |                       |                            |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Kick a goal        | 6. Pick up a phone ringing |
| 2. Make a sandwich    | 7. Lick an ice cream cone  |
| 3. Cross the street   | 8. Dress for winter recess |
| 4. Slide down a slide | 9. Build a Lego tower      |
| 5. Dig a hole         | 10. Airplane landing       |

See the Subject-to-Subject Teacher Example (master copies) of what the students' daily assessment should model. Monitor, assist, and check in with individual students that their own work follows the subject-to-subject transition. If it does not, point out that the subjects and views change but the action does not (McCloud, 1993). Help them fix mistakes.

- Differentiation Tip: Teachers may either assign certain actions. This offers a greater challenge to students, and provides more examples to discuss and look at later.
- Differentiation Tip: Teachers let students choose their own action to illustrate. This allows the student to pick an action they can already relate to, and provides the opportunity to look at the same action from different viewpoints if multiple students chose the same action.
- Tip: Have students use the same action they illustrated on day 1. They will illustrate it in a completely different way today, and really get to see how action-to-action, and subject-to subject look different.
- Tip: Limit 15-20 min.

If time allows, either have students share with the whole group, or a partner, their 3-panel subject-to-subject sequence in order to practice reading aloud the gutters in comics.

#### Day 4:

Use the poster to review this week's objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, "I can understand the cause and effects by making inferences when looking at the use of gutter transitions in a graphic novel."

Introduce scene-to-scene gutter transitions. Use the Scene-to-Scene Samples in the master copies (McCloud, 1993). This can be displayed as a poster, or on a doc-cam. Explain how in each panel greater deductive reasoning and inferencing is needed because the transitions happen across a significant distance of time and/or space (Strum, 2013).

➤ Tip: limit to 5 min.

Ask student to find, and describe, specific examples of scene-to-scene transitions in the gutter spaces between panels in this week's graphic novel story "Under the Floorboards." Here are some following examples to share with students at the beginning, or places to suggest struggling students go to for more assistance (Kibuishi, 2011).

- P. 15, gutter between frames 3&4: Readers are in the mother's room during the day then transition to the girl's room at night.
- P. 17, all frames: Each frame shows a different part of the house (space) throughout one day (time). Readers see a scene in the hallway, kitchen, bedroom, living room, and mother's room.

➤ Tip: Limit to 10-15 min.



- Tip: Give students a few min. to silently find examples, and then require all students to share one idea to check for understanding of all students.
- Re-teaching Tip: When students share examples in the graphic novel have them count and say what frame number they want the group to look at; this will reinforce lesson 1 “Choice of Frame” objectives. Have all students in the group point to the same frame.

Pass out the Making Inferences with Gutter Booklet (see master copies) to each student. Students will create one 3-panel strip of scene-to-scene gutter transitions (Cary, 2004). Provide are 6 new event to illustrate from beginning, middle, and end; modify as needed for the demographic and age group of your students.

- |  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Plane trip to a village                 | 4. Views from your drive to school   |
| 2. Growing up as a baby, kid, adult        | 5. Changes from summer, winter, fall |
| 3. What 3 different people do after school | 6. People looking for a lost dog     |

See the Scene-to-Scene Teacher Example (master copies) of what the students’ daily assessment should model. Monitor, assist, and check in with individual students that their own work follows the scene-to-scene transition. If it does not, point out that each panel needs to show a different time or space (McCloud, 1993). Help them fix mistakes.

- Differentiation Tip: Teachers may either assign certain events. This offers a greater challenge to students, and provides more examples to discuss and look at later.
- Differentiation Tip: Teachers let students choose their own events to illustrate. This allows the student to pick an event they can already relate to, and provides the opportunity to look at the same event from different

viewpoints if multiple students chose the same event.

➤ Tip: Limit 15-20 min.

If time allows, either have students share with the whole group, or a partner, their 3-panel scene-to-scene sequence in order to practice reading aloud the gutters in comics.

### **Assessments:**

Day 2: (Formative) Students find and inference an action-to-action gutter example from the weekly graphic novel correctly.

(Summative) Students correctly create a 3-panel example of an action-to-action transition to model cause and effect within a short event.

Day 3: (Formative) Students find and inference a subject-to-subject gutter example from the weekly graphic novel correctly.

(Summative) Students correctly create a 3-panel example of a subject-to-subject transition to model cause and effect within a short event.

Day 4: (Formative) Students find and inference a scene-to-scene gutter example from the weekly graphic novel correctly.

(Summative) Students correctly create a 3-panel example of a scene-to-scene transition to model cause and effect within a short event.

### **Master Copies Index:**

Please refer to the links found in the Lesson 2 Materials section of the Teacher's Manual for all the master copies teachers will need to prep for the weekly lessons.

## Appendix C

### Lesson 3: The Soldier's Daughter

#### Objective:

*Describe plot and story structure (comprehension skill):* Students determine the main idea of a graphic novel and analyze the development by summarizing key supporting details and ideas. Students analyze how the words and pictures develop and interact over the course of a graphic novel.

*Understand text structure (comprehension strategies):* Students analyze the structure of types of word bubbles in a graphic novel and comic strip to see how the word bubbles relate to, and explain, the whole story.

*Choice of words (graphic novel element):* Students interpret speech bubbles, thought bubbles, and narrative boxes in a graphic novel, and analyze how those specific word choices shape the meaning or tone of the story.

#### Common Core State Standards:

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2

Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development;  
summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.3

Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact

over the course of a text.

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.4

Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.5

Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

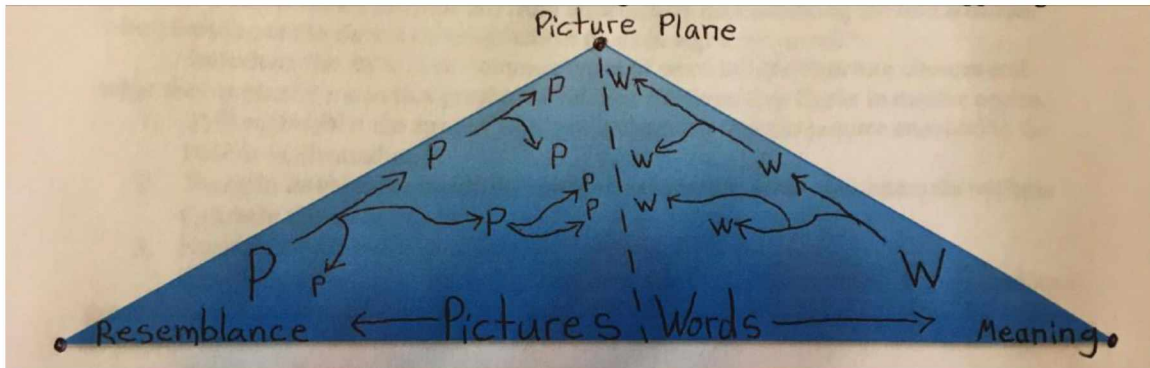
### **Background Information:**

This background information is for you, the teacher, to quickly get familiar with the basic theory behind the “choice of words” in a graphic novel.

The earliest forms of a written language, from the Incas to the Egyptians, started as stylized pictures. Then written language progressed to only representing sounds and lost most of the visual representation, so much so that today most people view literature and art as separate forms of communication. Yet picture and words still change and develop into new forms (McCloud, 1993). Pictures and artwork, for example, in the late 1600’s works like Rembrandt were very realistic and specific. Then the art movement changed by the 1900’s to Expressionism and Cubism where the art was no longer realistic but back to symbolic. Words have gone through a similar trajectory in the opposite direction (McCloud, 1993). Works by Dante or Shakespeare are classic examples of meaning being expressed by elaborate words. Today we see words be used in special

fonts, poem forms, and ads in a way to resemble a picture. Both pictures and words have started to borrow resemblance and meaning from each other again, and this makes the medium of comics so powerful because it naturally combines the two (McCloud, 1993).

The diagram below is a visual of this happening.



Combining pictures with words in comics can be done in a number of ways. Here are some common ways that explain why and how certain word bubble choices are used. First there are “word specific” combinations, when pictures illustrate but don’t add to completing the story (McCloud, 1993). The use of the narration box helps complete the text. Then there are “picture specific” combinations because the words do little more than add a soundtrack to a visually told sequence (McCloud, 1993). Another type is the “additive” combination, when the words amplify or elaborate on an image or vice versa (McCloud, 1993). Both “picture specific” and “additive” combinations make good use of talking and thought bubbles. The most common type of word/picture combination is “interdependence.” They go hand in hand to convey an idea that could not be expressed by the words or pictures alone (McCloud, 1993). All three types of word bubble choice are used interchangeably for this combination. A good rule of thumb to keep in mind is:

the more that is said with words the more the pictures can be freed to the creative imagination and vice versa (McCloud, 1993).

**Materials:**

- Copies of [Explorer: The Mystery Boxes](#), edited by Kazu Kibuishi (enough for pairs to share the book).
- [Interactive poster](#) of the weekly goal for students to focus and learn (see master copies for example/update)
- [Speech Bubble](#) Cue Card (use on day 1)
- [Thought Bubble](#) Cue Card (use on day 1)
- [Narration Box](#) Cue Card (use on day 1)
- Soldier's Daughter [P.81 Lesson Example](#)
- Soldier's Daughter [P.81 Template](#)
- Soldier's Daughter [P.83 Template](#) (copy enough for pairs to work with)
- Soldier's Daughter [P.91 Template](#) (copy enough for pairs to work with)
- Choice of Words [Extra Practice 1](#) (copy enough for individuals to work with)
- Choice of Words [Extra Practice 2](#) (copy enough for individuals to work with)
- Samples of [student created work](#) (use for teacher's reference)

**Daily Lessons:**Day 1:

Use the poster to introduce this week's objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, "I can describe the plot and story structure by understanding the text structure

when looking at the choice of word bubble types in a graphic novel.”

Introduce the three most common types of word bubble structure choices and what they typically mean in a graphic novel. See the three Cue Cards in master copies (Brown, 2013).

1. Talking bubble: the spoken words of a character that the pointer attached to the bubble is directed at.
2. Thought bubble: the inside thoughts of a character, other characters do not hear this only the reader does.
3. Narration box: narrator telling more details about the plot

Read aloud the “The Soldier’s Daughter” (p. 76-93) to students. When reading a graphic novel as a read aloud make sure to read the words and pictures, explaining the sequence of the plot aloud. Also, point to each frame you are reading, and have students point to the same frame as they follow along.

While reading aloud make sure to use the following example to teach about some of the common word bubble choices the creator used and how they are structured (text structure) to help the readers understand the plot (story structure) in a graphic novel (Kibuishi, 2011). As a teacher use digression on which examples you want to point out, or others you notice yourself, based on your students’ comprehension level, your connection to the story, etc.

- P. 78, all frames: The whole page uses the narration box to develop the plot and conflict of the story.
- P. 80, frame 3: Read the spoken word bubbles straight down. This shows a conversation between the brother and sister, and the brothers response to the sister

pointing a sword at him in the picture.

- P. 82, frames 2&3: Stop to point out that the creator is using the narration box in different ways. Frame 2 the words narrate the setting and plot, but in frame 3 it acts like a thought bubble of the girl.
- P. 86-90. The creator used black thought bubbles for the father's words, but the daughter can hear his thoughts, and responds to them in white spoken word bubbles.

### Day 2 and 3:

Use the poster to review this week's objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, "I can describe the plot and story structure by understanding the text structure when looking at the choice of word bubble types in a graphic novel."

Reread "The Soldier's Daughter" with the group of students. Today students will practice filling in words for wordless frames with by using different word bubble structures, with the goal that the words have interdependence with the picture. Stop reading at a wordless frame; hold up one of the Cue Cards. Model "filling in" the words for that part of the plot based on the structure type of word bubble (Brown, 2013). Do this a few times. Here are a few examples and suggestions.

- P. 79, frame 1: Narration box, "Finally the rain stopped."
- P. 79, frame 7: Thought bubble, "This is the most serious thing I have ever said in my life."
- P. 80, frame 6: Talking bubble, "Captain Vaal's army is getting closer everyday, soon our home won't be safe."



After the teacher models the activity have individual students take turns reading a page at a time, stopping at wordless frames. The teacher holds up one of the cue cards for that student to “fill in” (Brown, 2013). The student’s words should match the images and actions in the frame and continue the story correctly. The goal is that words have interdependence with the picture. Assist and correct if they are incorrect. Here are a few suggestions to prompt students with.

- P. 81, frame 4: Hold up the Thought Bubble Cue Card
  - P. 82, frame 1: Hold up the Thought Bubble Cue Card
  - P. 82, frame 5: Hold up the Narration Box Cue Card
  - P. 83, frame 6: Hold up the Thought Bubble Cue Card
  - P. 83, frame 9: Hold up the Talking Bubble Cue Card
  - P. 84, frame 6: Hold up the Narration Box Cue Card
  - P. 85, frame 5: Hold up the Talking Bubble Cue Card
- Differentiation Tip: Provide a greater change to students and let them pick what cue card they want to use to fill in wordless frames.
- Tip: This activity was challenging for 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students and took two 30 min. lessons and two rereading for the students to really feel confident in “filling in” their own words.

#### Day 4:

Use the poster to review this week’s objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, “I can describe the plot and story structure by understanding the text structure when looking at the choice of word bubble types in a graphic novel.”

Today students will use “The Soldier’s Daughter” P.81, 83, and 91 Templates (see master copies) to fill in the blank word bubbles and create a new story for the page (Cary, 2004). Model how to do this with the whole group using P. 81 template (see Soldier’s Daughter P.81 Lesson Example in master copies for final product). Work collaboratively with the students to add words in the bubbles that make a new story and relates to the images as well.

Pair students to work together on filling in the word bubbles for either P.83 or 91 templates to create a new story. The students’ story should not repeat the words that were used in the original story. Students should be creating a story by using the structure of word bubbles to develop a plot for the images given (Brown, 2013). Check pair’s work and, assist when needed. Once pairs correctly fill in their comic page they can individually work on a Choice of Words Extra Practice (see master copies). If time allows, let students choose a comic they wrote to read aloud to the group.

- Tip: Place students’ work on a doc-cam when students are sharing their comics so everyone can see it.

**Assessments:**

Day 2 and 3: (formative) Student’s words match the images and actions in the frame and continue the story correctly with the text structure they were given.

Day 4: (summative) Students should be creating a story by using the structure of word bubbles to develop a plot for the images given.

**Master Copies Index:**

Please refer to the links found in the Lesson 3 Materials section of the Teacher's Manual for all the master copies teachers will need to prep for the weekly lessons.

## Appendix D

### Lesson 4: The Butter Thief

#### Objective:

*Determine author's purpose/Identify the point of view (comprehension skill):* Students will assess how the point of view of the image within a frame shapes the content and understanding of a graphic novel or comic strip. Students will express what the comic creator wants the reader to understand from those points of views.

*Make inferences (comprehension strategies):* Students will closely read a graphic novel or comic strip to cite specific image details as evidence to make logical inferences from it, and make conclusions drawn from those images.

*Choice of Image (graphic novel element):* Students analyze the structure of images and their details in a graphic novel and comic strip to see how the images relate to, and help explain, the whole story.

#### Common Core State Standards:

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1

Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.5

Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.6

Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

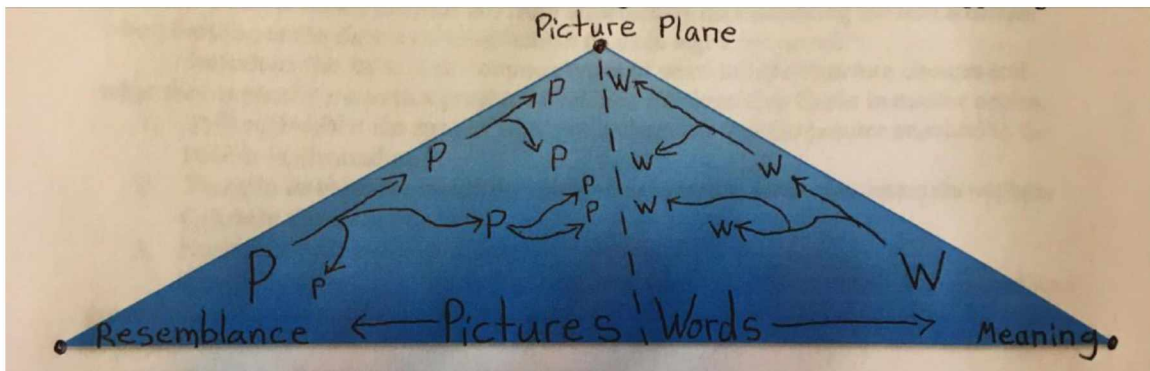
**Background Information:**

This background information is for you, the teacher, to quickly get familiar with the basic theory behind the “choice of image” in a graphic novel.

The earliest forms of a written language, from the Incas to the Egyptians, started as stylized pictures. Then written language progressed to only representing sounds and lost most of the visual representation, so much so that today most people view literature and art as separate forms of communication. Yet picture and words still change and develop into new forms (McCloud, 1993). For example, pictures and artwork in the late 1600's, works like Rembrandt, were very realistic and specific. Then the art movement changed by the 1900's to Expressionism and Cubism where the art was no longer realistic but back to symbolic. Words have gone through a similar trajectory in the opposite direction (McCloud, 1993). Works by Dante or Shakespeare are classic examples of meaning being expressed by elaborate words. Today we see words used in special fonts, poem forms, and ads in a way to resemble a picture. Both pictures and words have started to borrow resemblance and meaning from each other again, and this makes the

medium of comics so powerful because it naturally combines the two (McCloud, 1993).

The diagram below is a visual of this happening.



A good rule of thumb to keep in mind is that the more that is said with words the more the pictures can be freed to the creative imagination and vice versa (McCloud, 1993). Comics that are “wordless” and made mostly of pictures provided the reader the opportunity to practice their creative use of words. When reading independently, this is done inside the mind. When reading aloud to a partner, or group, it provides a lot of opportunities for oral or written language building. This building happens in three steps of thinking, as described by Swain’s Comprehensible Output Hypothesis (2001), all that are used in the Day 3 Lesson.

Comprehensible Output Hypothesis is Swain’s theory that language learners need to deliver a comprehensible message in order for the learning to be validated beyond a semantic process to a syntactic process (Swain, 2001). Swain identified three possible functions of output: the noticing function, the hypothesis-testing function, and the metalinguistic function (Swain, 2001). The lesson on Day 3 gives opportunities for students to apply each of these functions. The noticing function happens when students look at the five visual choices, as mentioned by Seyfrid in the literature review section

(2008), and cannot express with words what they see visually. The hypothesis-testing function is applied when students brainstorm and share possible outcomes and predictions for the gutter space between panels, as mentioned by Strum (2013), in order to help them better express orally what the readers see visually. The metalinguistic function is the final output given by the students when they collaboratively create their own interpretations of the story, as they did so often in the study by Brown (2013).

**Materials:**

- Copies of [Explorer: The Mystery Boxes](#), edited by Kazu Kibuishi (enough for pairs to share the book).
- [Interactive poster](#) of the weekly goal for students to focus and learn (see master copies for example/update)
- [Images and Pictures Detective](#) Worksheet (enough copies for each student)
- [Scripting Images and Pictures](#) Worksheet (enough copies for each student)
- Owly: Hanging up to Dry ([teacher's example](#) of Day 3 lesson)
- Owly: Hanging up to Dry ([blank comic](#) to use on Day 3 lesson)
- Owly: [Gone Swimmin' Comic](#) (enough copies for paired student)
- Owly: [Hatchin' Friends Comic](#) (enough copies for paired student)
- Owly: [Let's Go Fly a Kite Comic](#) (enough copies for paired student)
- Samples of [student created work](#) (use for teacher's reference)

**Daily Lessons:**Day 1:

Use the poster to introduce this week's objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, "I can determine the author's purpose and identify the point of view by making inferences when looking at the choice of images in a graphic novel." Explain that details in the pictures and images show different points of view, or what the authors want you to notice, but as a reader you make all of those inferences in your own mind to comprehend the story (Seyfried, 2008).

Teacher reads aloud "The Butter Thief." This comic relies heavily on images, and uses little words to tell the plot. While reading really model how to not just name the objects you see in the images, but to use those as clues to "tell" your own story from them. Here are a few examples to teach about the author's purpose and point of view and how the images help the readers make those inferences (Kibuishi, 2011). As a teacher use digression on which examples you want to point out, or others you notice yourself, based on your students' comprehension level, your connection to the story, etc.

- P. 60, frames 1 & 2: frame 1 shows the grandma's point of view of looking and reaching for the butter, frame 2 shows us what grandma looks like from the point of the butter spirit in the box. This human vs. spirit point of view is done throughout the comic. Very important to notice that image choice because it is done right from the beginning.
- P. 61, frames 3,4 & 5,6: This shows a change from day to night, yet the girl is still thinking about watching her grandma bury the box.
- P. 61, frames 5-8: The point of view is as if the buried box is watching the house, girl come outside, and start digging. The point of view changes when the girl looks down at the reviled box in the last frame.



- P. 63, frame 1 & 2: Again the human vs. spirit point of view is shown. Frame 1 what the girl sees looking down into the box, frame 2 what the spirit sees while cursing the girl.
- P. 64-65, all frames: The images help readers determine the real spirit, and the newly cursed girl spirit. Real spirit has red eyebrows, no pupils in yellow eyes, and a beard. The girl spirit has green eyebrows, can see her pupils, and a ponytail.
- P. 66, frame 3: The first time we see the protective spirit he is shown standing in front of the house. The author's purpose for this choice is to show us what he protects.
- P. 67, frame 7: The point of view of the kitchen has changed, the tiles are much larger than they were on p. 60, frame 3.

### Day 2:

Use the poster to review this week's objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, "I can determine the author's purpose and identify the point of view by making inferences when looking at the choice of images in a graphic novel."

Today students will read "The Butter Thief" to become a detective and look for clues in the images and pictures to understand the whole story. They will ask themselves the questions on the Images and Picture Detective Worksheet (see master copies) as they "read the images" in the comic (Brenner, 2015). As a whole group, look at pages 60-61 together. Ask the 6 questions that are on the worksheet, students and teacher share answers with the group. Then, assign each student 2, side-by-side, pages to become

“expert detectives” on the choice of images. Pass out the Images and Picture Detective Worksheet (see master copies) to each student. Allow the rest of the lesson time for students to write out the clues they notice from the images on their pages. This worksheet will be used as a reference for students to use when they read aloud “The Butter Thief” to the group on Day 4.

- Teaching Tip: Younger students may have a slower start on this individual assignment. Go through each question aloud with them, as they fill in their own answers, or check in with each student, one-on-one, to assist on his or her own pages as needed.
- Teaching Tip: The last question on the Images and Picture Detective Worksheet (see master copies); may be difficult for younger students to do alone. Provide more one-on-one teaching for this, only us this question for upper grade levels, or set aside an extra day where the whole group can find correct examples on each page.

### Day 3:

Use the poster to review this week’s objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, “I can determine the author’s purpose and identify the point of view by making inferences when looking at the choice of images in a graphic novel.”

Today students will script wordless comics (Cary, 2004). Scripting the images requires students to make inferences that will tell, in their own words, the author’s story. Use the “Owly: Hanging up to Dry” (blank comic, see master copies) to model for the students the three different readings pairs will do. Have one student model with you, as a

fishbowl activity. First read, both you and student silent read the comic to yourselves. Try to figure out what story is being told. Second read, read the comic with your partner, stopping at images and panels that you have questions about, or have different ideas about what is happening in the story. Make sure both you and your partner agree with the inferences you are making about frames you are unsure of. Third read, write out a script to tell the story. Each frame needs a sentence explaining the images (see “Owly: Hanging up to Dry,” teacher’s example for ideas).

After modeling the activity, pair students up to script one of the following wordless comics; “Owly: Gone Swimmin’”, “Owly: Hatchin’ Friends,” or “Owly: Let’s Go Fly a Kite” (see master copies). Pass out the Scripting Images and Pictures Worksheet (see master copies). As time permits, pairs can share their scripts with the teacher or whole group.

- Teacher Tip: To model the 3<sup>rd</sup> read, I read each frame sentence in order (see “Owly: Hanging up to Dry,” teacher’s example) as the student helper points to the frame that matched the new story development.
- Teacher Tip: Set a timer for each of the three different paired readings. 3 min to silent read, 5-7 min to discuss images and story without scripting, 10-15 min to work on writing the script on the worksheet.
- Differentiation Tip: The 3<sup>rd</sup> read of scripting can be done orally or written.

#### Day 4:

Use the poster to review this week’s objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, “I can determine the author’s purpose and identify the point of view by making

inferences when looking at the choice of images in a graphic novel.”

Students re-read their two pages (from Day 2 lesson) from “The Butter Thief” aloud to the group. To practice noticing the choice of image, have students script the images first (like they did in Day 3 Lesson), then read the word bubbles after. This requires the students to infer the author’s point of view of what is happening in the story. Use guiding questions to assess students’ ability to correctly share new details about the choice of images that they noticed.

**Assessments:**

Day 2: (Formative) Students correctly find details in the images that help them make inferences about the story, author’s purpose, and point of view on their own. Use guiding questions to assess students’ ability to correctly share new details about the choice of images that they notice.

Day 3: (Summative) Students’ scripting worksheet correctly narrates a story for the wordless comic. It should be a narration, not an explanation of what images are in the frame.

Day 4: (Summative) Students re-read their two pages from “The Butter Thief” aloud to the group. Use guiding questions to assess students’ ability to correctly share new details about the choice of images that they notice.

**Master Copies Index:**

Please refer to the links found in the Lesson 4 Materials section of the Teacher's Manual for all the master copies teachers will need to prep for the weekly lessons.

## Appendix E

### Lesson 5: Spring Cleaning

#### Objective:

*Make predictions (comprehension skill):* Students will closely read a graphic novel or comic strip to cite specific image details as evidence to make logical predictions from it, and make conclusions drawn from those images.

*Ask questions (comprehension strategies):* Students will analyze how, when, where, what, who and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of the images and pictures in a graphic novel.

*Choice of movement (graphic novel element):* Students analyze the structure of movement lines, as well as movement of character and things, in a graphic novel and comic strip to see how the images relate to, and help explain, the whole story.

#### Common Core State Standards:

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1

Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.3

Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

**Background Information:**

This background information is for you, the teacher, to quickly get familiar with the basic theory behind the “choice of movement” in a graphic novel.

Each frame in a comic must logically link to the next so that ultimately all frames add up to a meaningful whole. This is what is known as cohesion and coherence. The cohesion is seen by the movement changes in comics (McCloud, 1993). The choice of movement can be shown in two commonly used ways (Seyfried, 2008).

First, the change in the movement of character’s facial expressions, body language or objects from one frame to the next will show a logical link (see Day 1 for examples). Second, are the uses of movement lines within the frame’s art. All the wavy lines seen in comics represent a symbol or visual metaphor for emotions or our five senses (refer back to Lesson 2 and 4 background notes) (McCloud, 1993). For example wavy lines around a face may symbolize dizziness, yet zig-zag lines around the same face may symbolize anger. The ways the eyes and eyebrow lines are drawn in different frames also help express those same emotions. The placements of the character's hands are also examples of movement that show emotions. Wavy lines can also apply to the readers’ senses other than visual (McCloud, 1993). Wavy lines above a loaf of bread, expresses smell and taste. Those same wavy lines behind a person running can expresses movement of the air, or coming out of an instrument to expresses sound. Finally, those wavy lines above a mystery box, express the imagination of touch. In more advance

level graphic novels, the choice of moment lines may be used as the background to symbolize a prevailing theme or emotion in the plot (McCloud, 1993).

**Materials:**

- Copies of Explorer: The Mystery Boxes, edited by Kazu Kibuishi (enough for pairs to share the book).
- [Interactive poster](#) of the weekly goal for students to focus and learn (see master copies for example/update)
- “Spring Cleaning” [Missing Panel: Pages 24-39](#) (side-by side copy of two pages, one for each student)
- [Choice of Movement](#) Worksheet (one copy for each student)
- Choice of Movement Worksheet: [Teacher Example](#) (for teacher’s notes and ideas)
- Samples of [student created work](#) (use for teacher’s reference)

**Daily Lessons:**Day 1:

Use the poster to introduce this week’s objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, “I can make predictions by asking questions when looking at the choice of movement in a graphic novel.”

Pass out a “Spring Cleaning” Missing Panel side by side page copy of to each student (see master copies). Explain that today they will make a prediction on what is happening underneath the “hidden” panel to express the movement of the story and characters (Cary, 2004). Guide student to look carefully at the previous and next panels



images and words (review of lesson 3 and 4) for clues on what had to happen in the hidden frame to make the next frame make sense to the reader. Students may write their predictions on the blank frame. Allow about 5 min for students to silently read their section of the comic, and make a prediction. Then, starting with the first 2 pages, have each student come up to read aloud their page to the class, and share their prediction of the hidden frame. Once the prediction is made the teacher reveals the real page in the book to compare if the prediction was correct or not. Also explain why it was a valid prediction or not, based on what the previous and next frames showed.

While students read aloud make sure to use the following examples from the first 4 pages to teach about the choice of movement in a graphic novel (Kibuishi, 2011). As a teacher use digression on which examples you want to point out, or others you notice yourself, based on your students' comprehension level, your connection to the story, etc.

- P. 24-25, frame 8: The previous frame shows the boy starting to throw toys out of his closet, the next frame shows the boy sitting by his closet and looking confused at a box. This means that the hidden frame should be about the boy finding the box in his closet.
- P. 26-27, frame 8: The previous frame shows the boy asking a question to the man at the door, the next frame shows the man answering a question but not the question the reader saw. This means that the hidden frame shows the man answering the original question and the boy asking another question.
- Teacher tip: have this first read be a pre-assessment on how much or little students are reading the movement clues aloud, or even notice. Some may not even notice, some notice but won't share aloud unless asked, some naturally

describe the movement in the panel before even reading the word bubbles.

### Day 2:

Use the poster to review this week's objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, "I can make predictions by asking questions when looking at the choice of movement in a graphic novel."

This day is an extra day for the day 1 activity. Thirty minutes was not long enough for each student to read aloud their pages, make a prediction, and have the teacher discuss with the group what made the prediction valid, or what questions should have been asked about the previous and next frames to make the prediction more accurate. Use today to finish the activity from day 1.

Today students create their own note page to use for tomorrow's lesson. Pass out Choice of Movement Worksheet (see master copies) to each student. They lay the blank page across their assigned side-by side pages from lesson 1 to roughly trace the choice of frames that were used on those pages, and number each frame (review from lesson 1). See the Choice of Movement Worksheet: Teacher Example (master copies) for an example of the correct set up.

### Day 3:

Use the poster to review this week's objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, "I can make predictions by asking questions when looking at the choice of movement in a graphic novel."

As a whole group look at pages 24-25 in "Spring Cleaning." Model for the

students how to look at each frame to notice the movement that is happening inside. Focus on movement lines, facial expression, and body actions, or changes of objects in the images (Seyfried, 2008). Make this a whole group discussion, while the teacher records the predictions of movement the students notice. See Choice of Movement Worksheet: Teacher Example for possible ideas (master copies).

Once students know what to do with their Choice of Movement Worksheet have them silent read their side-by-side pages and record their own notes of movement choice. The teacher checks in with individual students to make sure prediction of the movement lines, etc. are correct. Use the following examples to teach about the choice of movement for each side-by side pages. As a teacher use digression on which examples you want to point out, or others you notice yourself, based on your students' comprehension level, your connection to the story, etc.

- P. 26/27: The camera flash, the computer mouse moving, the girl's speed and dust lines.
- P. 28/29: The wizard walking through a closed door, the older brother breaking up the fighting wizards, the wand zapping the girl into a frog.
- P. 30/31: The frog hopping lines, the puzzle box using magical powers, the kids looking through the window blinds.
- P. 32/33: The girl swiveling onto the computer chair, the wizards battle lines, the kids bouncing up the stairs lines.
- P. 34/35: The boy sitting up tall for an idea lines, the bus driving fast lines, the kids walking up to a house.
- P.36/37: The kids turning heads to the crash lines, magical lines of objects, lines

that show the puzzle box coming apart.

- P. 38/39: The boxes vanishing lines, the girl wizard running fast past people, the wizard fighting dust lines

#### Day 4:

Use the poster to review this week's objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, "I can make predictions by asking questions when looking at the choice of movement in a graphic novel."

Students re-read their two pages (from Day 3 lesson) from "Spring Cleaning" aloud to the group. To practice noticing the choice of movement, have students script the movement first, then read the word bubbles after. This requires the students to predict what is happening in each frame. Use guiding questions to assess students' ability to correctly share new details about the choice of movement that they notice.

#### **Assessments:**

Day 1 & 2: (Summative) Determine how much or little students are reading the movement clues aloud, or even notice. Some may not even notice, some notice but won't share aloud unless asked, some naturally describe the movement in the panel before even reading the word bubbles.

Day 3: (Summative) Students record their own notes of movement choice in a graphic novel. This includes movement lines, facial expression, and body actions, or changes of objects in the images.

Day 4: (Formative) Students re-read their two pages at a time from “Spring Cleaning” aloud to the group. Use guiding questions to assess students’ ability to correctly share new details about the choice of movement that they notice.

**Master Copies Index:**

Please refer to the links found in the Lesson 5 Materials section of the Teacher’s Manual for all the master copies teachers will need to prep for the weekly lessons.

## Appendix F

### Lesson 6: The Keeper's Treasure

#### Objective:

*Describe Figurative Language (comprehension skill):* Students interpret words and phrases as they are used in a graphic novel, determine connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how those specific word choices shape the meaning.

*Visualize (comprehension strategies):* Students analyze the structure of words and images and how they relate to each other and the whole, in order to learn new vocabulary terms.

*Choice of Words (graphic novel element):* Students interpret the use of limited words in a graphic novel, and analyze how those specific word choices shape the meaning of the story.

#### Common Core State Standards:

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.4

Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.5

Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences,

paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

**Background Information:**

This background information is for you, the teacher, to quickly get familiar with the basic theory behind the “choice of vocabulary words” in a graphic novel. This lesson is created to assist students who are English Language Learners. Multiple types of learners, from ELL to struggling readers, have shown increased improvement in reading because of the elements used to create a graphic novel (Brenner, 2015). These elements require students to use decoding and comprehension skills with new words that rely on visuals for the meaning (Cary, 2004). ELL students who struggle with English they can learn vocabulary through visuals, and the use of the following second language teaching methodologies.

James Asher, the creator of Total Physical Response, which is a language teaching method, states “the interaction between listening and body motion can enhance the comprehension and internalization of language input and facilitate long term retention” (as cited in Hwang, 2014, p. 434). The interactions between visual, auditory, and motor functions while learning new language skills is needed to fully express a new learner's understanding when they may not have the confidence or ability to express understanding orally. TPR brings Gardner's kinesthetic intelligence to the forefront of language acquisition in a meaningful context (Hwang, 2014). TPR is used in this lesson because of the strong connections adjectives have to visuals, and verbs have to motor functions. TPR also increases learners' interaction with, and attention to, the language

and literacy lessons.

The Direct Method theorizes that language is learned through the direct association of words and phrases through objects and actions without the use of the native language as an intervention. Lessons are usually developed around a here and now theme with specially chosen pictures to express that theme, and much of class time is spent responding to the teacher's questions. Complete and meaningful sentences are used, but grammar rules are not explicitly taught (O'Maggio Hadley, 2001). In this week's lesson, I am only relying on one language, English, without connecting the new vocabulary to other background languages. It focuses around pictures from printouts, and the story "The Keeper's Treasure." The students' response comes from my prompts, or their peers, but requires them to make a direct association through objects and actions.

Comprehensible Output Hypothesis is Swain's theory that language learners need to deliver a comprehensible message in order for the learning to be validated beyond a semantic process to a syntactic process. Swain identified three possible functions of output: the noticing function, the hypothesis-testing function, and the metalinguistic function (Swain, 2001). This lesson gives opportunities for students to apply each of these functions. The noticing function happens when students look at the five visual choices, as mentioned by Seyfrid in the literature review section (2008), and cannot express with words what they see visually. The hypothesis-testing function is applied when students brainstorm and share possible outcomes and predictions for the gutter space between panels, as mentioned by Strum (2013), in order to help them better express orally what the readers see visually. The metalinguistic function is the final output given by the students when they collaboratively create their own interpretations of the story, as



they did so often in the study by Brown (2013).

**Materials:**

- Copies of [Explorer: The Mystery Boxes](#), edited by Kazu Kibuishi (enough for pairs to share the book).
- [Interactive poster](#) of the weekly goal for students to focus and learn (see master copies for example/update)
- Picture [flash cards of the target basic nouns](#), and ones that use descriptive adjectives for the same noun.
- [Flash cards with target verbs](#) and adverbs written on them.
- Collection of “props” for student to use while creating a mini-skits (these can be student made, or creative use of what is supplied in the room already).

**Daily Lessons:**Day 1:

Use the poster to introduce this week’s objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, “I can describe figurative language by visualizing when looking at the choice of vocabulary words used in a graphic novel.”

Explain to students that when reading a story you imagine the characters acting out that story in your head. So readers need to imagine what that action is when they read. Ask students if they remember what we call words that we can act out (this is a review from past verb lessons). Explain to them that you are going to call out a verb or verb phrase everyone will act out as a first guess, even if they don’t know for sure yet.

Remind the students that everyone acts things out differently, so there is no right or wrong way. The verb/adverb (or phrase) list is as follows:

|           |                            |                |              |
|-----------|----------------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Reach     | Hustle                     | Lost           | Stand back   |
| Wonders   | Hot to the touch           | Hatch          | Grant a wish |
| Imagining | Live up to my expectations | Heart's desire | Perhaps      |

Next, explain to the students that good readers also notice details in the words or pictures to help them understand the story better. Explain that you have some photos of objects that will also be in the story we will read. Display all 20 photos to the group and give them a few min. to look them over. Call out a noun or noun with an adjective. Ask students to point to the one that matched the best, explain there could be more than one correct picture. The noun/adjective list is as follows:

|                         |                   |                           |
|-------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Revolting, endless, bog | Glacial wasteland | Endless, empty, labyrinth |
| Treasure chest          | Ancient artifacts | Long-lost remnants        |
| Dragon egg              | Ferocious beast   | All-powerful genie        |
| Great                   | An exit           |                           |

Again, this activity is to be used to activate background knowledge, and as an informal pre-assessment. If time allows, read through the story “The Keeper’s Treasure” as a read aloud. Students follow along.

Day 2:

Use the poster to review this week's objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, "I can describe figurative language by visualizing when looking at the choice of vocabulary words used in a graphic novel."

Today's lesson is read "The Keeper's Treasure" as a group. The teacher begins by reading the first few pages, guiding the students to read the speech bubbles as well as the pictures. Do this by "thinking aloud" what you notice happening in each frame, and how the pictures are giving just as many clues to what is happening as the words. Also read what each character says in different voices. This is to show students what you expect when it's their turn to read the graphic novel aloud.

Today's focus is on the verbs/adverbs and nouns/adjectives from the story, which are the same ones from the flash cards yesterday. Stop reading when you get to one of those phrases and discuss how they are expressed in the graphics. Make the connection that often, if you don't know what a word means, you can get its meaning from the action clues, or visual details in the frames. Ask students to act out the verbs in the same way it is shown in the story. Talk about how particular adjectives help describe the picture better than just a basic noun used alone. Read the entire graphic story in this manner, having students take turns reading a page the way you did at the beginning.

➤ Teacher Tip: This day's reading can be split into 2 separate readings if time allows.

One reading for just the verbs/adverbs discussion. The second read just for the nouns/adjectives discussion.

Day 3:

Use the poster to review this week's objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, "I can describe figurative language by visualizing when looking at the choice of vocabulary words used in a graphic novel."

Play the flash card games from day one with the students again as a way to assess new learning. For the verb flash cards, show or whisper one verb to a student to act out, the other students point to the verb flash card that was being expressed. Take turns in this manner until all verbs have been reviewed. Then have students take turns choosing one verb card. That one student comes up with a sentence using that verb. Everyone else acts out the sentence in his or her own way.

For the noun flash cards review the images by saying the phrase that describes the one you are looking at. Students will point to the correct one. Then, students will describe in their own phrase a picture for the rest of the group to "spy." End the lesson by explaining and assigning the next day activity to pairs.

Day 4:

Use the poster to review this week's objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, "I can describe figurative language by visualizing when looking at the choice of vocabulary words used in a graphic novel."

Each pair will "act out" part of the graphic story for the rest of the group. Each group will pick 2-4 of the learned verbs and 2-4 of the learned descriptive nouns; so that no groups will have the same vocabulary terms. The pairs will act out the character and story based around the verbs and descriptive nouns they received. The pairs must

actively use the verbs in their skit and incorporate objects that represent the nouns.

Allow students to read from the text as their dialogue if they do not want to make up their own. Give 15 min. for pairs to plan and practice their skits. The last 15 min. will be to share and present to the small group.

**Assessments:**

Day 1: (Pre-assessment) This is meant to be an informal pre-assessment to see how much clearer each verb, adverb, or figurative noun needs to be explained or practiced this week.

Day 3: (Formative) Students play the flash card games again from day one with to assess new learning of the figurative language and vocabulary.

Day 4: (Summative) Pairs actively, and correctly, use their assigned verbs, and incorporate objects that represent the assigned nouns in their skit.

**Master Copies Index:**

Please refer to the links found in the Lesson 6 Materials section of the Teacher's Manual for all the master copies teachers will need to prep for the weekly lessons.

## Appendix G

### Lesson 7: The Escape Option

#### Objective:

*Summarize (comprehension skill):* Students will independently continue the ending of a story by creating the next part to an open, unfinished, ending in the story, but keep the central ideas or themes of the comic. This will assess the students' ability to summarize, and apply that skill, to continue the development of a plot with supporting details and ideas.

*Make Connections (comprehension strategies):* Students will collaboratively develop their own details to elaborate parts of a story. This will require students to apply narrative dialogue about connecting to the text, and determine correct sequence of events to contribute more details to a part of the story.

*Choice of Flow (graphic novel element):* Students analyze the structure of all previously taught choices in a graphic novel to see how those choices relate to each other as a whole. Students will apply those graphic novel element choices to elaborate a part of the graphic novel, as well as create their own ending to the same graphic novel.

#### Common Core State Standards:

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2

Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development;

summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.5

Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

### **Background Information:**

This background information is for you, the teacher, to quickly get familiar with the basic theory behind the “choice of flow” in a graphic novel.

The “choice of flow” can be described as how all the other individual element choices (frames, gutters, word bubbles, images, movement, and words) are used together to create the whole graphic novel and the flow in reading each reader has when looking at them all. There is no right way to silently read a graphic novel. In fact, many readers read them differently. Some read images and words together panel-by-panel, others may look at the pictures first then go back to read the words. Any way you read the pages in a graphic novel the flow is still present (Brenner, 2015).

This week the story is read as a cumulative review. Students will focus on all graphic novel element choices from past lessons. Using the comprehension skills and strategies of summarizing and making connections will help students understand the complete flow of the graphic novel. Students will express the “choice of flow” in two different ways. Once, as a way to review and enrich certain pages within the story already; the second, by creating their own ending to the graphic novel story that finishes

with an unknown ending.

The first 4 days of this lesson are for students to recreate a page by applying all previously taught lesson on graphic novel elements (Cary, 2004; Frey & Fisher, 2008).

This will be shown in the following manner:

- *Frame Choice:* Students number the frame order correctly after cutting and pasting to a larger paper.
- *Use of Gutters:* Scripting the images and looking at the space between the frames will require them to realize, and state, if the gutters are action-to-action, subject-to-subject, or scene-to-scene change.
- *Choice of words:* Students will get to pick what word bubble type to add to the wordless panels, and the vocabulary words they use to put inside the word bubbles.
- *Image Choice:* Scripting the images will allow students to tell the story through just the images choices that were used.
- *Choice of movement:* The movement lines and body actions will be expressed when students describe the movement in their scripting or read aloud.

The last 4 days of this lesson are for students to create their own comic pages to continue the story by applying all previously taught lesson on graphic novel elements (Cary, 2004; Frey & Fisher, 2008). This will be done in the following manner:

- *Prewriting:* Plan and script out the panels for the next “chapter.”
- *Drafting:* Quickly sketch images in the panels that show what your scripted out.
- *Revising:* Improve images with use of details, gutter transitions, and movement lines.



- *Editing:* Rough draft word bubbles types and what goes inside to fill in the missing parts of the story.
- *Publishing:* Create a final copy to the next chapter. Use best images, colors, and word bubbles inside the frames.

**Materials:**

- Copies of [Explorer: The Mystery Boxes](#), edited by Kazu Kibuishi (enough for pairs to share the book).
- [Interactive poster](#) of the weekly goal for students to focus and learn (see master copies for example/update)
- Photocopies of the wordless comic panels on pages 112, 115, 116, 123 and 124
- [Speech bubbles templates](#) (two of each for each student)
- White paper larger than standard size (one for each pair)
- [Teacher's examples](#) of written task assignment (use for teacher's reference)
- Chart paper/whiteboard and markers
- [Prewriting/Drafting Comics](#) Worksheet (two for each student, once as notes, once as sketches)
- [Blank comic panels](#) worksheet (two-sided, one for each student)
- Pencils, and colored pencils
- Post-Its (one for each student)
- [Describing Wordless Pages](#) (use for teacher's reference)
- [Next Chapter Flow](#) (use for teacher's reference)
- Samples of [student created work](#) (use for teacher's reference)

**Daily Lessons:**Day 1:

Use the poster to introduce this week's objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, "I can summarize by making connections when looking at the choice of flow, or all graphic element choices, working together, in a graphic novel."

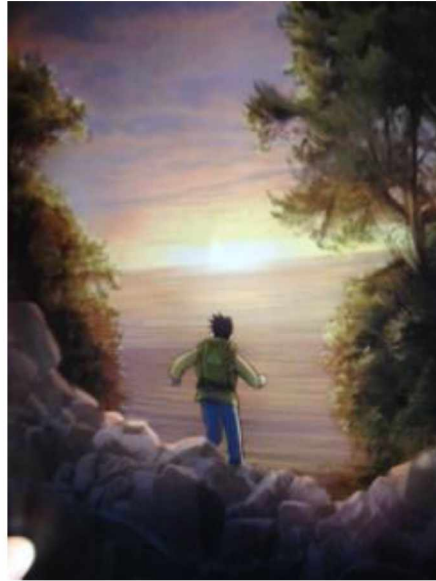
Today's lesson is to read "The Escape Option" as a group. Give a few min. for the students to silently read the comic, so they can take in the whole story themselves. Bring them all back to the beginning. Ask students about what they think about hiking, spaceships, aliens, Earth Day, etc. This will bring students' individual connection to the story to the forefront of their minds. The teacher begins by reading the first few pages, guiding the students to read the speech bubbles as well as the pictures. Do this by "thinking aloud" about what you notice happening in each frame, and how the pictures are giving just as many clues to what is happening as the words. Also read what each character says in different voices. This is to show students what you expect when it's their turn to read the graphic novel aloud.

Today's focus is on the panels that do not have any dialogue inside. You will still "read the pictures" through explaining the scene. Tell students that to read these parts of the comic you are really relying on your knowledge of the order of events, summarizing, and making connections, to have this part make sense to you. Read the entire graphic story in this manner, having students take turns reading a page the way you did at the beginning.

When pages 112, 115, 116, 123 and 124 of the comic are "read" by individual

students write on a chart or whiteboard the phrases students used to describe the wordless panels. By now students will be comfortable orally narrating wordless panels to describe the sequence of events (see Describing Wordless Pages photo in master copies).

The final page, 126, is shown:



At the end of the story discuss what each student thinks will happen to the boy, and why he will make the choices he does. Ask students to give events and details from previously in the comic that support their opinion. This will make them apply summarizing and making connections as well. Record students' brainstormed possibilities on a chart as well (see The Next Chapter Flow photo in master copies).

While students read aloud here are some following examples my students made that relate to this week's objectives in a graphic novel (Kibuishi, 2011). As a teacher use digression on which examples you want to point out, or others you notice yourself, based

on your students comprehension level, your connection to the story, etc.

- P. 113, frame 2: the big frame zooms out to show just how big the box is compared to the kid (example of choice of frames).
- P. 114, frames 1-2: this is an action-to-action use of gutter space. The kids is looking for a camera (example of use of gutters).
- P. 117, frame 3: the alien's "tablet/computer" which my student thought was a stick at first (example of connection), have magic lines coming out of it. Must be why he knows shows much, because the thing is magical (example of choice of movement lines).
- P. 118, whole page: Students make the connection that the alien's computer "Percy" is like the "Siri" on humans' iPhones.
- P. 119, frames 1-3: Percy's word bubbles look different, student make that connection right away, without prompting (example of choice of words).
- P.120, frame 1: Students made the connection that the planet Requius is kind of like Mars, because human scientists are trying to get there too.

### Day 2:

Use the poster to review this week's objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, "I can summarize by making connections when looking at the choice of flow, or all graphic element choices, in a graphic novel."

Have the students to look back at pages 112, 115, 116, and 124. Ask them what they notice about those pages and what they have in common that is missing (no script or dialogue). Show students your teacher example of the script you provided for p. 112.

Assign one of the script-less pages to self-chosen pairs. Explain to the students they will work in pairs to write a script for what is happening on each panel as well as provide dialogue in the panels. Remind them that just as when “reading the pictures” aloud they will write down what is happening in each panel, as well as why it happens to tell the story in more detail. Students will work the remainder of the lesson on their collaborative task. Gather work at the end of the lesson period, in a way that students may continue on their work the following day.

### Day 3:

Use the poster to review this week’s objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, “I can summarize by making connections when looking at the choice of flow, or all graphic element choices, in a graphic novel.”

Students will continue to work on their collaborative task from yesterday. Provide the following directions where all students can see them. These are the steps that pairs need to take to complete the assignment, and are used as reference points on where to start working today:

1. Cut out frames.
2. Re-glue on bigger white paper with more space to write a sentence next to each frame.
3. Number frames in correct sequential order.
4. Script what is happening in the story for each frame.
5. Chose a word bubble to cut out and write what James is saying or thinking in each frame.

6. Meet with the teacher to discuss what type of transition is used between the panels, and turn in the assignment.

As students work in pairs, walk around the room assessing students' work, guiding their thought process, and making sure that the scripting and words used in the bubbles create more details and development to that part of the plot. Gather completed work at the end of the lesson period, these student created pages will be used in tomorrow's lesson.

#### Day 4:

Use the poster to review this week's objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, "I can summarize by making connections when looking at the choice of flow, or all graphic element choices, in a graphic novel."

Today's lesson is to read "The Escape Option" as a group. The focus is on the panels that do not have words explaining them or any dialogue inside. When you get to pages 112, 115, 116, and 124 in the read aloud display the teacher's and students' created script pages for the group to read, and pairs to share. At this time, guide students in editing their work in sentence structure, as well as explaining in their writing what moves the story from one panel to another better. Often students will explain each panel as an individual picture, not part of a sequence that moves the main idea along.

#### Day 5-7:

Use the poster to review this week's objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, "I can summarize by making connections when looking at the choice of flow, or

all graphic element choices, in a graphic novel.”

Give a few min. for the students to silently read the comic, so they can take in the whole story themselves. Bring them all to the ending on p.126. Explain to students that this story has an open ending that allows individual readers to predict what will happen next. Review group’s predictions they had from day 1 (see The Next Chapter Flow photo in master copies). Have students write their name on one post-it, and place their name next to the main event they want to happen next in the story. Tell the group that they will get to create and expand their own ending to the story. Explain that they will be working like a real comic creator and use the writing process to make sure each graphic novel element choice they have been studying is used in the best way they can for their ending to this story.

Because students will each interpret the story differently they will do this assignment individually. Dialogue and sharing will be encouraged throughout their creative process though. Guide students to refer back to events in the story in order to help further their own connections, story, and summarizing. Allow simple, stick figures, to be drawn. Students will work the next 3- 5 days on their task.

- Tip: Teachers who choose to do days 5-8 of this lesson should create their own 2 page comic example of a possible ending. This allows you to know how to guide your students in the process, and determine what type of problems your students may run into.
- Differentiation Tip: The five steps used in the writing process explained in “Teacher Background” can be broken apart day-to-day for students that need more guidance in the writing process (5days). For students who are more

independent you can group the steps as prewriting/drafting, revising/editing, and publishing to speed up the processes (3 days).

Day 8:

Use the poster to review this week's objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, "I can summarize by making connections when looking at the choice of flow, or all graphic element choices, in a graphic novel."

Today's lesson is to read "The Escape Option" as a group. Give a few min. for the students to silently read the comic, so they can take in the whole story themselves. Bring them all back to the beginning. Quickly do a teacher summary of the comic, incorporating students' scripted ideas from day 4 on the script-less pages. The focus lesson today is on what will happen at the end of the comic. When you get to page 126 in the read aloud display the students' created comic pages for the group to read, and individuals to share. At this time, guide students in editing their work in sentence structure, dialogue, as well as suggesting ways they can move their story from one panel to another better. If time allows, let students share their favorite comic in the graphic novel, or read the other comic stories that were not part of the unit lessons.

**Assessments:**

Day 3: (Formative): Students' scripting and words used in the bubbles create more details and development to the part of the plot they are making connections to and summarizing.

Day 4: (Summative): The "choice of flow" is correctly understood if the student's created



page helps move the story along and provides more detail to the whole summary of the plot. The connections they made when creating this page should provide a correct summary for that page.

Day 8: (Summative): The “choice of flow” is correctly understood if students continue the ending of a story by creating the next part to an unfinished ending in the story, but keep the central ideas or themes of the comic. This will assess the students’ ability to summarize, and apply element of graphic novels, to continue the development of a plot with supporting details and ideas.

**Master Copies Index:**

Please refer to the links found in the Lesson 7 Materials section of the Teacher’s Manual for all the master copies teachers will need to prep for the weekly lessons.

# Teaching Literacy Skills with Graphic Novels to Elementary Students

Curriculum Unit for  
Grades 1-6

Created by Staci Gulsvig, 2017

A professor of curriculum studies, Karen Gavigan writes, “Consequently the burning question for school librarians regarding graphic novels in schools is no longer, should I include graphic novels in my collection? But, how can I use graphic novels to increase student achievement?” (Gavigan, 2012).

Thanks you educators for your commitment to helping students become lifelong readers! My hope is that this practical application of using graphic novels to teach literacy, in elementary schools, has the possibility of being shared with other educators, such as yourself, who seek out an alternative to teach literacy for their students.

Through my years as an educator and avid supporter of comic books in schools, I discovered that the majority of students do not independently check out graphic novels from the school library until 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. It is my hope that this curriculum can be used by 1<sup>st</sup> grade – 6<sup>th</sup> grade students and teachers. Teaching literacy with graphic novels can help younger students understand the complexity sooner, and then hopefully, be used more successfully throughout the primary grades and beyond. This curriculum unit of reading a graphic novel aloud in a group setting required a lot of communication and dialogue of students’ own metacognition. Therefore, I recommend only using this unit in small groups of 4 – 10 students during a small group time. The teacher manual is set up for about 30 min. lessons, four days a week, for 8 weeks.

The graphic novel I used in the book club is Explorers: The Mystery Boxes, edited by Kazu Kibuishi (2011). I chose this graphic novel because it is comprised of seven different graphic stories, all created by different authors. This makes it a great book to use as an introduction to teaching with graphic novels, because it naturally provides different ways graphic novels can make use of layout, artwork, and words (Monnin, 2013). Non-graphic novel enthusiasts confuse comics, graphic novels, and manga as different books even though they all fit under the same umbrella of Scott McCloud’s definition of, “juxtaposed pictorial and other images in deliberate sequence” (1993). Explorers: The Mystery Boxes clarifies that myth to educators. This book’s structure also helps to structure the curriculum, where each story focused on one element of graphic novels and relating that to a specific literacy comprehension skills and strategy (Monnin, 2013).

“The greatest power on earth is the magnificent power all of us possess...the power of the human brain!”  
~Charles Xavier (X-Men)

## Graphic Novel Book Club Unit

| <b>ELA Anchor Standards:<br/>College and Career<br/>Readiness for<br/>Reading*</b> | <b>Reading Comprehension Skills: What<br/>you want to be<br/>able to do</b> | <b>Reading Comprehension Strategies:<br/>How to achieve<br/>a skill</b> | <b>Graphic Novel<br/>Element</b>               | <b>Explorer<br/>Story</b>                              |
|--|---|---|--|--|
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA<br>·<br>R.3, 5  | Sequence<br>Events  | Understand Text<br>Structure  | Choice of<br>Frame                             | Whatzit,<br><a href="#">Lesson 1</a>                   |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA<br>·<br>R.1, 3, 5   | Cause and<br>Effect   | Make Inferences   | Use of Gutters<br>(3 Types of<br>Transitions)  | Under the<br>Floorboards,<br><a href="#">Lesson 2</a>  |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA<br>·<br>R.2, 3, 4, 5  | Describe<br>Plot/Story<br>Structure   | Understand Text<br>Structure  | Choice of<br>Words<br>(Speech<br>Bubble Types) | The Soldier's<br>Daughter,<br><a href="#">Lesson 3</a> |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA<br>·<br>R.1, 5, 6   | Determine<br>Author's<br>Purpose/Identify<br>the Point of<br>View           | Make Inferences   | Choice of<br>Image                             | The Butter<br>Thief,<br><a href="#">Lesson 4</a>       |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA<br>·<br>R.1, 3  | Make<br>Predictions   | Ask Questions   | Choice of<br>Movement                          | Spring<br>Cleaning,<br><a href="#">Lesson 5</a>        |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA<br>·<br>R.4, 5  | Describe<br>Figurative<br>Language  | Visualize   | Choice of<br>Words (Vocab<br>Based)            | The Keeper's<br>Treasure,<br><a href="#">Lesson 6</a>  |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA   | Summarize   | Make<br>Connections   | Choice of<br>Flow                              | The Escape<br>Option,                                  |

|        |  |  |  |                          |
|--------|--|--|--|--------------------------|
| R.2, 5 |  |  |  | <a href="#">Lesson 7</a> |
|--------|--|--|--|--------------------------|

### **Weekly Flow**

| <b>Day</b>    | <b>Objective</b>  |
|---------------|---|
| 1<br>(I do)   | Teacher reads aloud the graphic novel story to students. Model the desired reading comprehension skill/strategies while pointing out the specific graphic novel element that allows for those comprehension skill/strategies to be used.  |
| 2<br>(We do)  | Lesson/activity that teaches students how to look at the specific graphic novel element so they can understand the story more. The lesson builds the specific comprehension skill/strategies knowledge for the students.  |
| 3<br>(We do)  | Continuation of the lesson/activity from day 2.   |
| 4<br>(You do) | Students collaboratively re-read aloud the graphic novel story to the group. Teach guides them to use the desired reading comprehension skill/strategies while pointing out the specific graphic novel element that allows for those comprehension skill/strategies to be used. |

\*These are the CCSS I'll be using to show how this graphic novel unit can be used across the grade levels (1-6).

\*The K-12 standards define what students should understand and be able to do by the end of each grade. They correspond to the College and Career Readiness (CCR) anchor standards below by number. The CCR and grade-specific standards are necessary complements—the former providing broad standards, the latter providing additional specificity—that together define the skills and understandings that all students must demonstrate.

#### **Standards in this strand:**

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1](#)

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2](#)

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.3](#)

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.4](#)

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.5](#)

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.6](#)

## Lesson 1: Whatzits

### Objective:

*Sequence events (comprehension skill):* Students analyze how and why characters and events develop and interact over the course of a graphic novel, and place comic strips frames so that the sequence of events are in the correct order.

*Understand text structure (comprehension strategies):* Students analyze the structure of frames/panels in a graphic novel and comic strips to see how each frame relates to each other as a whole.

*Choice of Frame (graphic novel element):* Students interpret the correct order of frames on a comic page to read the story in the correct sequence. Students also discuss how the shape and size of the frame structure contributes to their understanding of the text.

### Common Core State Standards:

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.3

Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.5

Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

### **Background Information:**

This background information is for you, the teacher, to quickly get familiar with the basic theory behind the “choice of frame” in a graphic novel.

A graphic novel creator acts like a director when deciding what each panel and page layout shows. Readers should think about the frame of each panel. What are you seeing? What can't you see? What about the “camera” angle, or sound effects? What does the distance from the subject in the frame tell you? Why did the creator make those choices (Brenner, 2015)? Many of these questions can be answered by knowing some facts about the details of frame choices.

Each frame indicates a division, or break, of time and space to progress the story forward. This is why frames work as a real time representation of past (panel previously read), present (new panel to read), and future (upcoming panel). Therefore the pace at which panels change, and how much time seems to pass, is a careful decision made by the creator (McCloud, 1993). Some of the common frame types indicate these changes in time and space. The longer the frame means the longer that moment takes place in the story (McCloud, 1993). This is why the subject will usually be smaller or surrounded with more details in these frames. The opposite can be said for small frames, which help the readers focus on one important detail quickly. There are ways creators express the idea of timelessness too (McCloud, 1993). A frame with no words allows the reader to decide how long to pause on that frame before continuing the story, and represents a sense of constant inner thought of the characters. Frames with no borderlines are called “bleeders.” This shows readers that whatever is happening inside these frames “escapes” into an unidentified time within the plot line. This provides power to the reader to

determine the time frame within that panel (Frey & Fisher, 2008).

Examples, or suggestions, of how and when to show students the “choice of frame” within the weekly graphic novel story are explained in more detail under the Day 1 lesson notes (Kibuishi, 2011).

### **Materials:**

- Copies of Explorer: The Mystery Boxes, edited by Kazu Kibuishi (enough for pairs to share the book).
- Interactive poster of the weekly goal for students to focus and learn (see master copies for example/update)
- Cut up frames of “Cooperation Captions” comic strip (enough for pairs to share) placed in baggies
- Template for the correct “Cooperation Captions” frames (one for each pair)
- Cut up frames of “Foxtrot” comic strip and template for the correct frame layout placed in baggies
- Cut up frames of “Denise the Menace the Party’s Over” comic strip and template for the correct frame layout placed in baggies
- Cut up frames of “For Better or for Worse” comic strip and template for the correct frame layout placed in baggies
- Cut up frames of “Marvin” comic strip and template for the correct frame layout placed in a baggie
- Teacher example of “Mutts” Adding Frames to a Comic lesson
- 6 panel template (one per student)



- [“Mutts” comic strips](#) examples (one per student)
- Class set of scissors, glue, and pencils
- Samples of [student created work](#) (use for teacher’s reference)

## **Daily Lessons:**

### Day 1:

Introduce the new graphic novel book to students. Explain that Explorer: The Mystery Boxes has seven different short graphic stories and to read each story the class will practice using a comprehension skill, strategy and learning about an element all graphic novels have (Monnin, 2013). Use the poster to introduce this week’s objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, “I can sequence the events in a story by understanding the text structure when looking at the choice of frames in a graphic novel.”

Read aloud the “Whatzits” (p. 94-109) to students. When reading a graphic novel as a read aloud make sure to read the words and pictures, explaining the sequence of the plot aloud. Also, point to each frame you are reading, and have students point to the same frame as they follow along. This will help them realize the correct order (sequence) of the frame layout (structure) on the page.

While reading aloud make sure to use the following example to teach about some of the common frame types and how they are structured to help the readers understand the sequence in a graphic novel. As a teacher use digression on which examples you want to point out, or others you notice yourself, based on your students’ comprehension level, your connection to the story, etc.

- P. 96, full page frame: A common way graphic novels will introduce the setting

(spaceship in outer space) and leave visual clues for the next frame (same spaceship is seen on the first frame in p. 97).

- P. 97, frames go from big, to small, as the sequence unfolds: This slowly introduces the plot line and important characters in the story.
- P. 97, frames 2 and 3: Notice the word bubbles start in frame 2, but are coming from the character in frame 3. This is an example of a frame vs. time interaction. Both frames 2 and 3 are happening at the same time in the story sequence.
- P. 98, frame 5: This wide frame allows the reader's eyes time to pause and notice how momentous the task really is.
- P. 99, frame 1: Shows movement through time, the kid is in three different spots throughout that frame, not three different people.
- P. 99, frames 2-4: In frame 2 readers see the kid and the box, in frame 3 readers only see the kid, in frame 4 readers only see the box. These focused frames foreshadow the important connection between the kid and the box for the story's sequence.
- P. 101, frames 1-2: The sound WARGL is split between the two frames, also showing a frame vs. time interaction. The frame shape in frame 1 is larger on top to show us the kid is looking up at the creature, the same way frame 2 is larger on the bottom to show us the creature is looking down at the kid.
- P. 102, frame 5/6: The frame within a frame shows the readers in more detail the kids expression to what he/and the readers see happening in the larger frame.

- P.103, circle shape frame template: These frames show cause and effect in the sequence of the story. Read the top frame first, to see what the kid needs to do. Read the circle frame second, what happened when he tried. Read the surrounding frames last, what the effect was from not catching on the planets.
- P. 105, frame 7: The bleeder frame at the bottom of the page shows that the running around and cleaning up is constant and timeless.
- P. 106, frame 6: This taller frame of the grandpa peering down at the kid (shown in 2 frames) expresses the age, size, and power difference between the characters.
- P. 108, frames 2-4: These frames go from wide to small rectangles, as well as 3, 2, 1 characters in each. This sequence help the readers pick out the “bully” of the little kid.

### Day 2:

Use the poster to review this week’s objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, “I can sequence the events in a story by understanding the text structure when looking at the choice of frames in a graphic novel.”

Pass out precut panels of the “Cooperation Caption” comics and frame outlines for pairs to put in sequence order. Do this as a whole group activity. Explain that the frame shape gives you clues to the correct order; you also need to look at the details inside the frames to make sure the sequence of the story makes sense (Frey & Fisher, 2008). Pass out new precut comic panels to put in sequence order. Do this in pairs, each pair works on a different comic strip. Help pairs in their sequence reasoning by pointing out details

of the frame to help figure out the correct sequence. Students share their reading of the comics to the group when all pairs have put their choice of frames in the correct structure.

- Tip: Have students number the correct frame order of the back of the precut frames. These “Comic Puzzles” can be used as a center activity, or independent practice in the future.
- Tip: The comics used in this lesson have a range of easiest to hardest to sequence; Foxtrot, For Better or for Worse, Denise the Menace, and finally, Marvin. Match comics to pairs that will match their ability in the task.
- Differentiated Tip: Upper grade levels have the choice of not using the frame outline page. For a greater challenge, fit all the frames on a blank page layout instead.

### Day 3:

Use the poster to review this week’s objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, “I can sequence the events in a story by understanding the text structure when looking at the choice of frames in a graphic novel.”

Use the “Mutts” comics to add two other events in the sequence of the plot. See the “teacher example” for the final product of today’s lesson. Read the two Mutts comics with the students, have each student pick the one they thought was the funniest. This will be the comic they add their own frames to. Show student the teacher example for the lesson. Explain how you added a frame to the middle and end of the comic to tell more about the story. Give students the task to add two extra frames in their comic to tell more

about the beginning, middle, or end. Cut out the four frames, glue onto the 6 frames template. Students must understand the text structure to leave two of the frames blank in the correct place they want to add details to the story (Cary, 2004). Students draw their own beginning, middle, or end frames, and write a sentence underneath to describe what is happening.

Have students share with the group the places they added to the sequence of events in their comic (Cary, 2004). Make sure students' frames match within the correct sequence, and read from panel to the next panel in a way that makes sense. Help correct those that do not, and complement on story details of those that do.

- Differentiated Tip: Adding a frame at the very beginning and end is the easiest way students who are struggling with sequencing or structure will correctly learn this concept. More challenging is to add frames in the middle of the comic for more advanced students.

#### Day 4:

Use the poster to review this week's objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, "I can sequence the events in a story by understanding the text structure when looking at the choice of frames in a graphic novel."

Students re-read "Whatzits" aloud to the group. Have one student read 2 pages aloud at a time, while other students track the frames with their fingers. Use guiding questions to get students to share new details about frames they notice. You may also use the examples from Day 1 again to guide students to notice those common frame types, and how they are structured to help the readers understand the sequence in the graphic

novel (Kibuishi, 2011).

**Assessments:**

Day 2: (Formative) Students share their reading of the comic to the group when the pair has put the choice of frames in the correct structure.

Day 3: (Formative) Students share with the group the places they added to the sequence of events in their own comic. Students' frames must match within the correct sequence, and read from one panel to the next panel in a way that makes sense.

Day 4: (Summative) Students re-read two pages at a time from "Whatzits" aloud to the group. Use guiding questions to assess students' ability to correctly share new details about the choice of frames that they notice.

**Master Copies Index:**

Please refer to the following pages that correspond to the Lesson 1 Materials section of the Teacher's Manual for all the master copies teachers will need to prep for the weekly lessons.

# EXPLORER: <sup>The</sup> Mystery Boxes

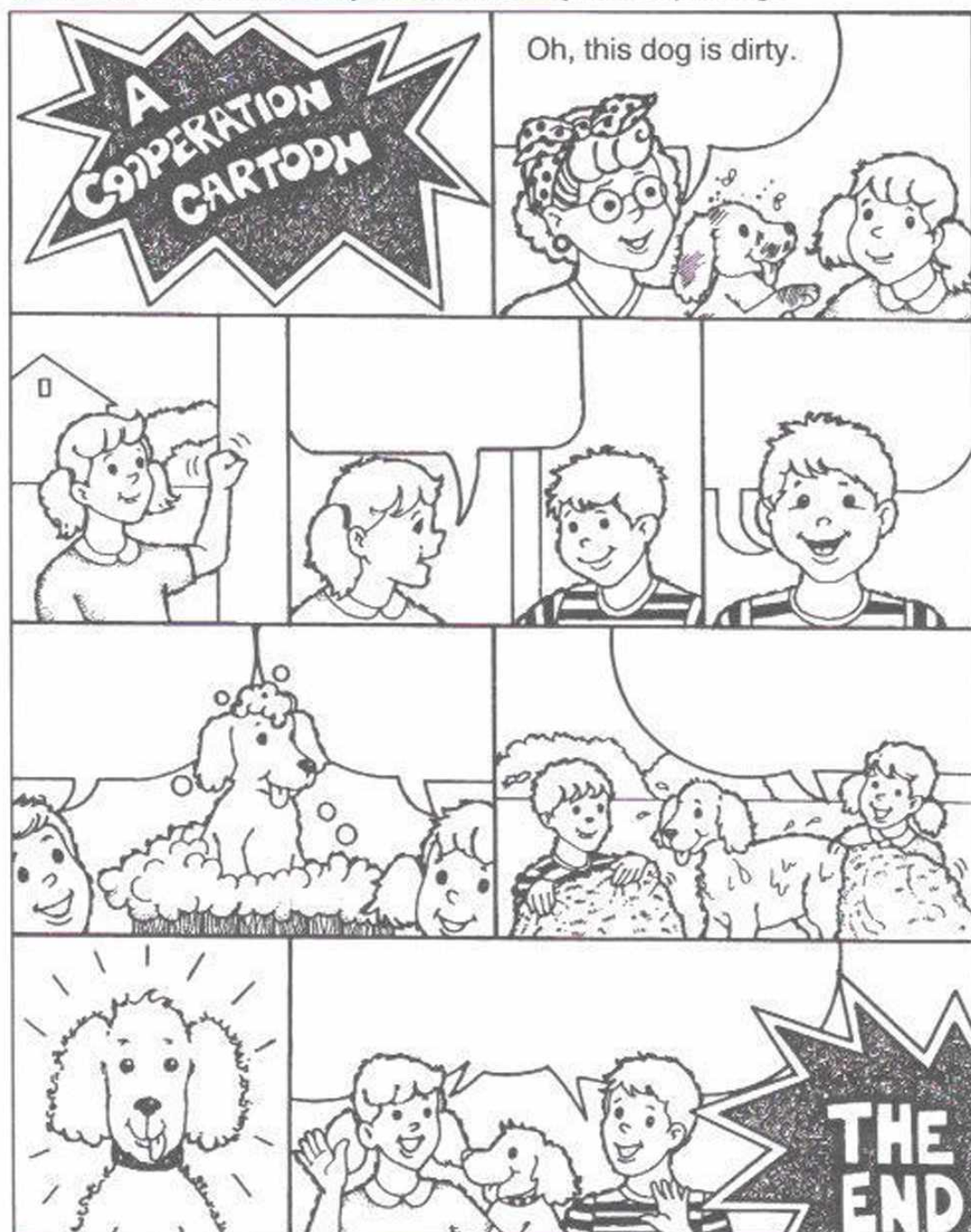
| Comprehension Skill:<br>"I can..." | Comprehension Strategies:<br>"By..." | Graphic Novel Element | Story:   |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------|
| Sequence Events                    | Understand Text Structure            | Choice of Frame       | Whatzit! |
|                                    |                                      |                       |          |
|                                    |                                      |                       |          |
|                                    |                                      |                       |          |
|                                    |                                      |                       |          |
|                                    |                                      |                       |          |

Name \_\_\_\_\_

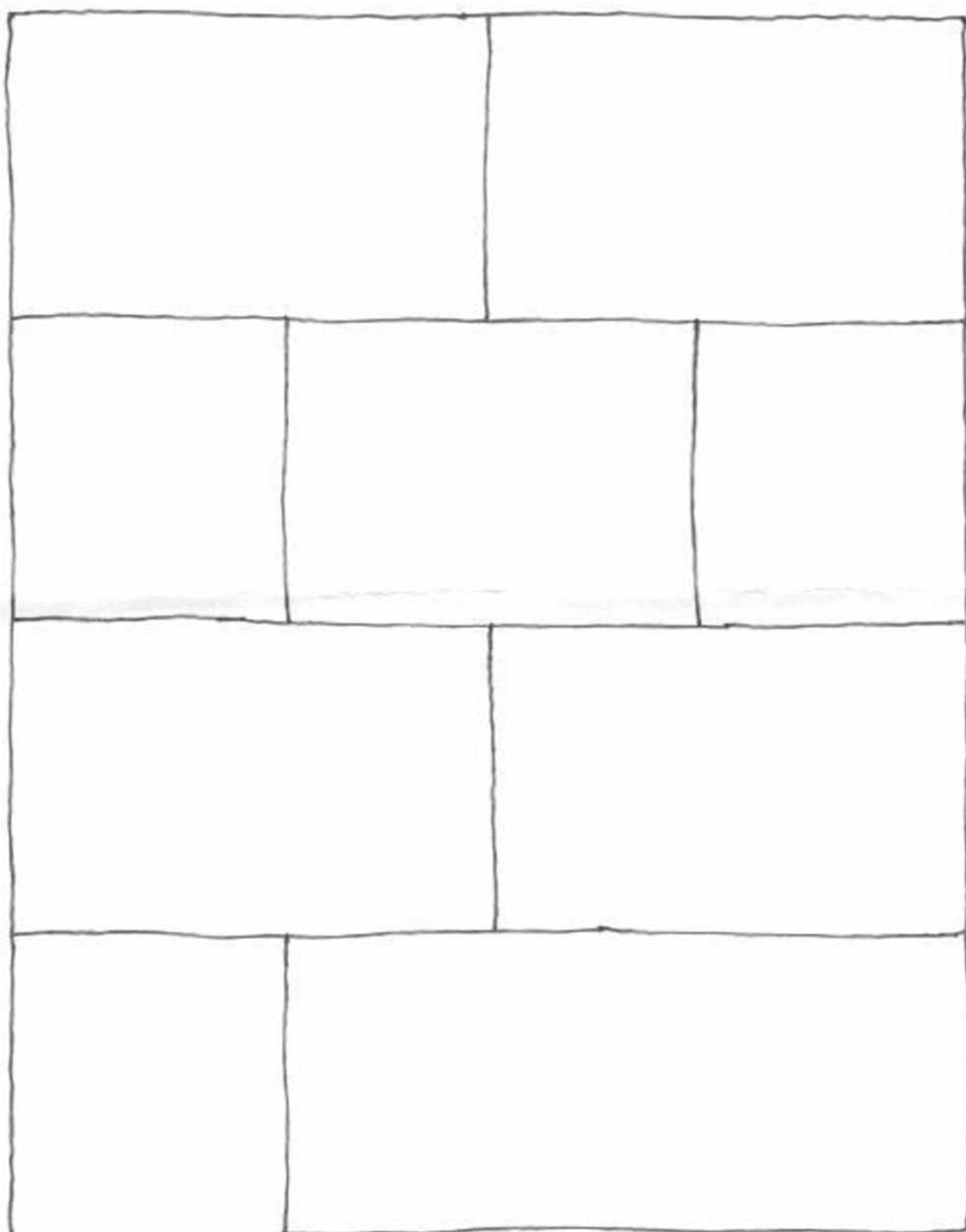
Language and Writing Experiences

## Cooperation Captions

Write what the characters say to show that they are cooperating.



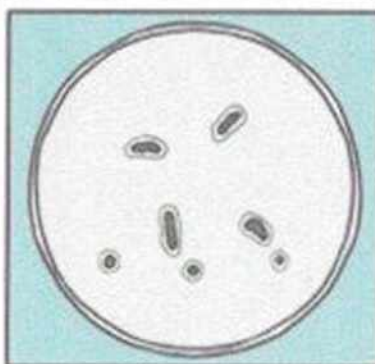
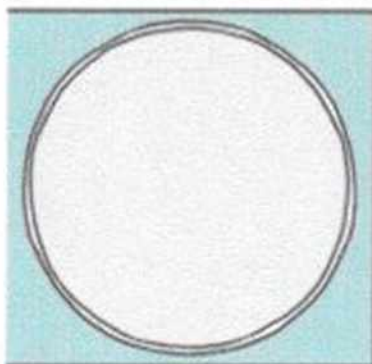






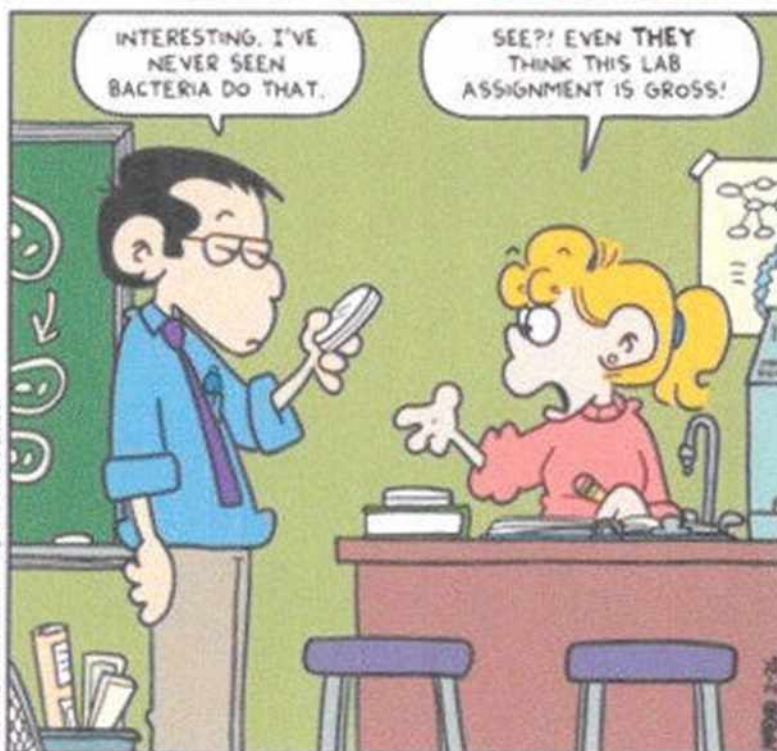
# FoxTrot

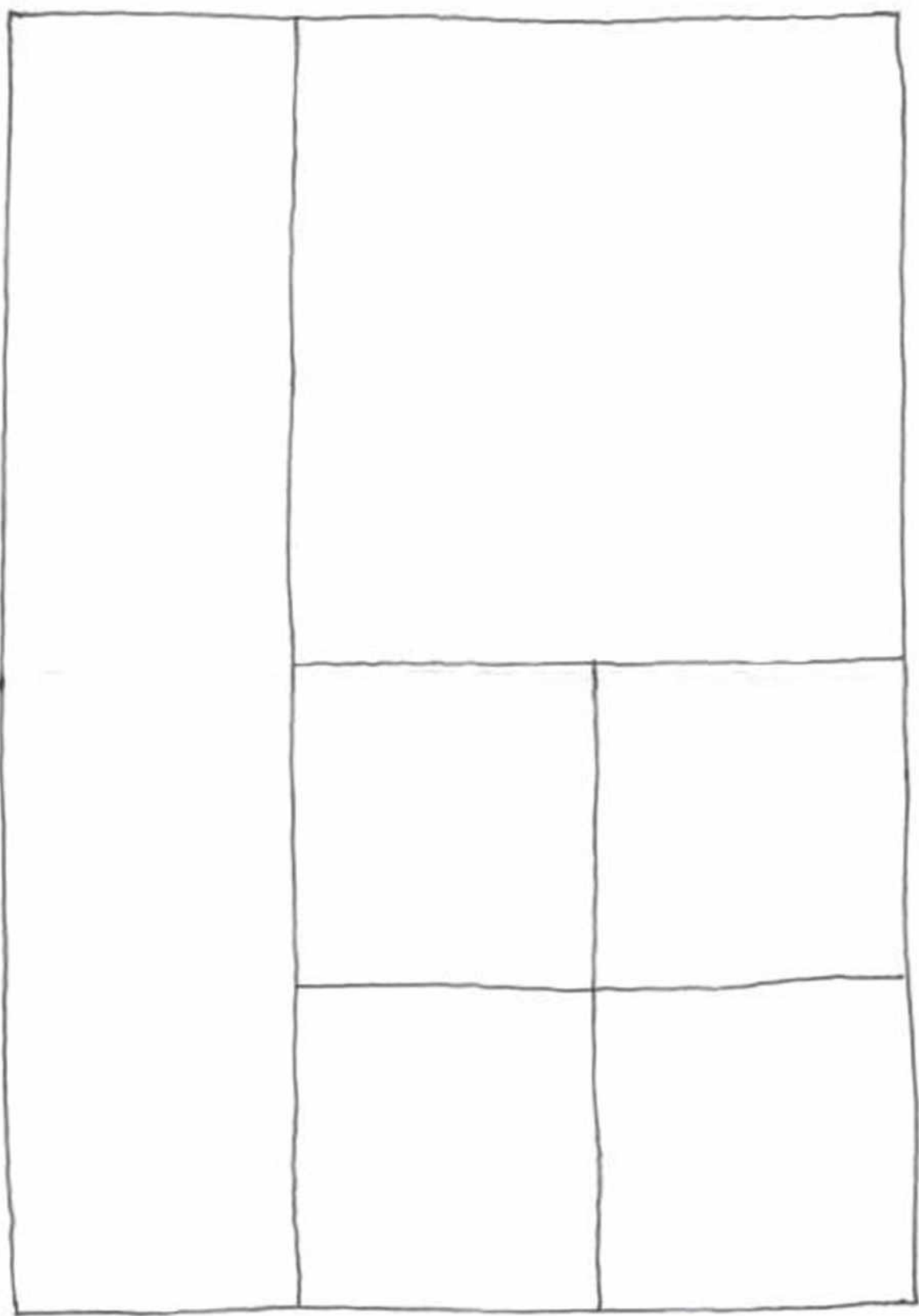
by Bill Amend

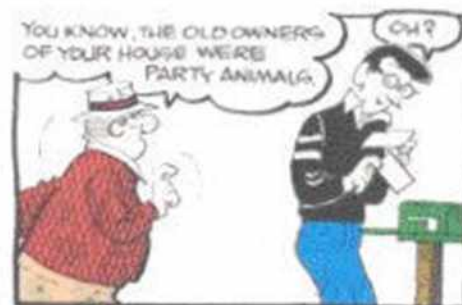


www.foxit.com | better @illamend

©2017 Bill Amend / Drawn by Andrew Miller



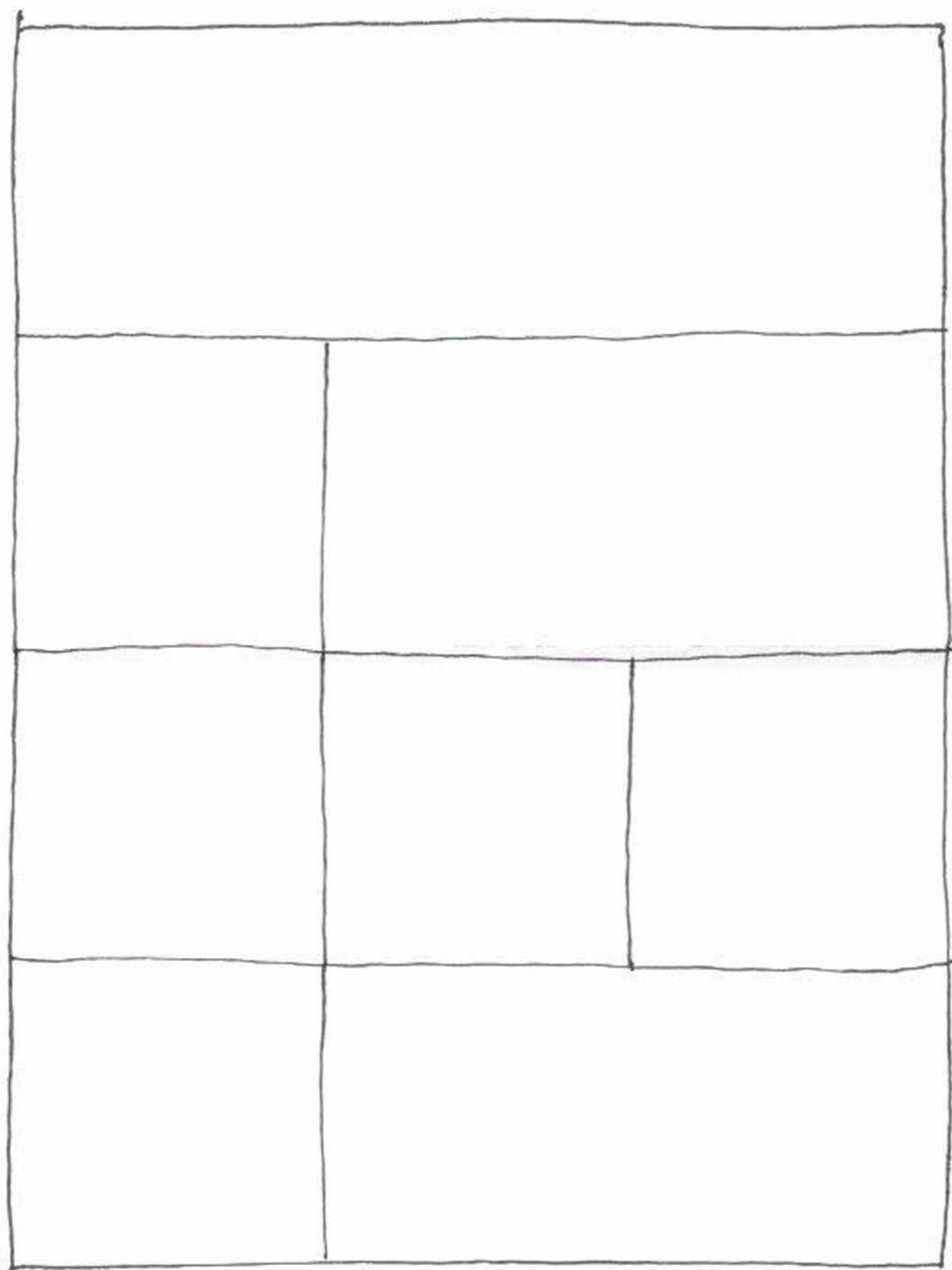




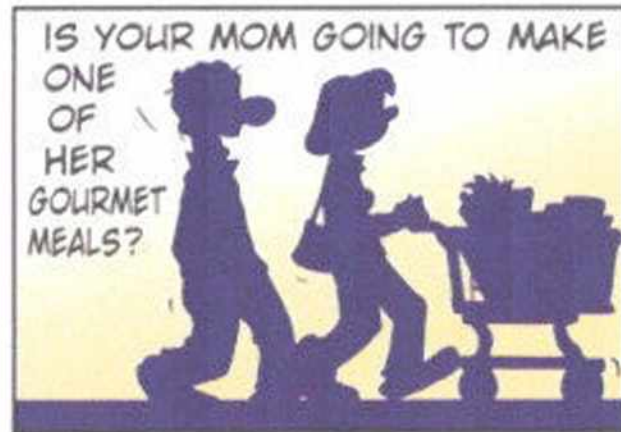
|  |  |
|--|--|
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |











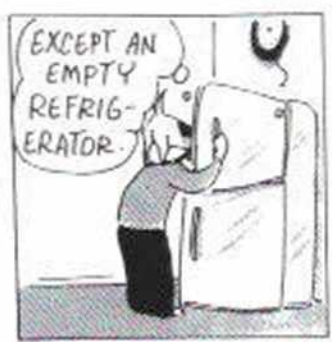


|  |  |
|--|--|
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

# Teacher Example



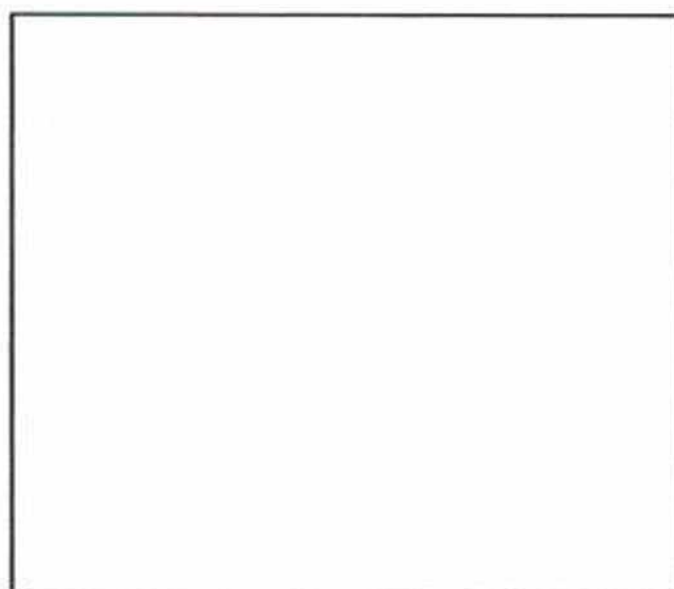
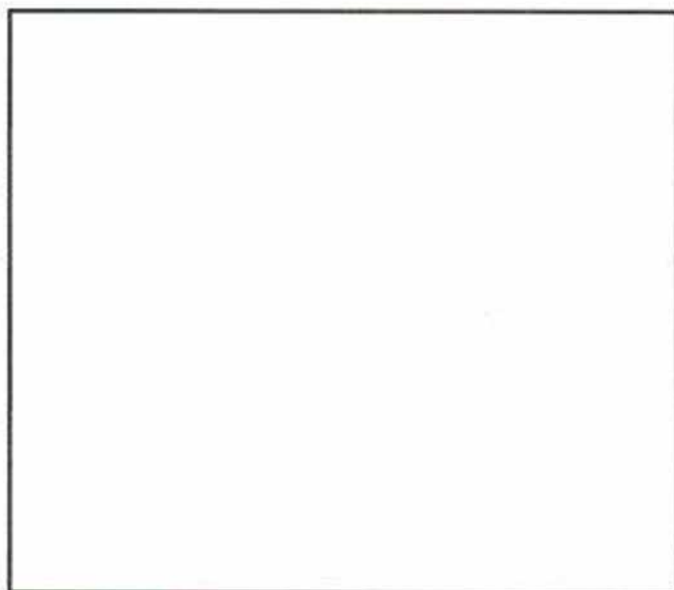
The man hears the dog bark while watching T.V.



© 1999 by the author. All rights reserved.



Buying food at the store to fill up the frig.



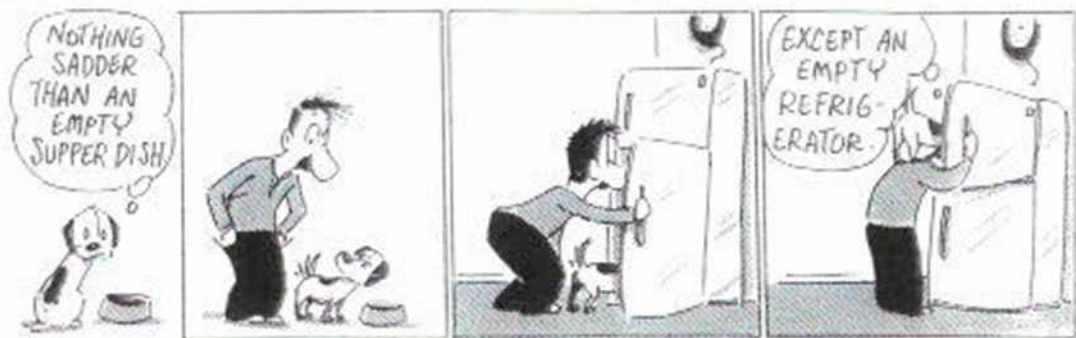
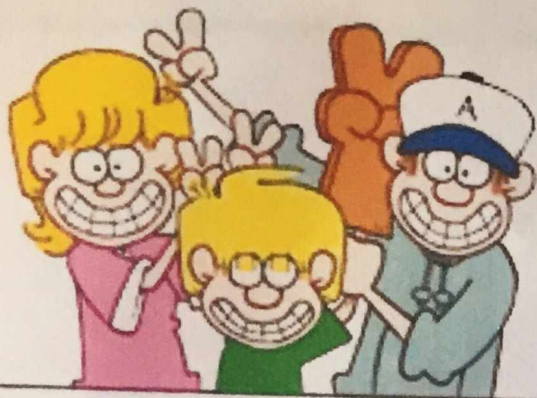


FIG. 3-2 Mutt & Jeff by Patrick McDonnell. Copyright © 1996 by Patrick McDonnell. Reprinted by special permission of King Features Syndicate.



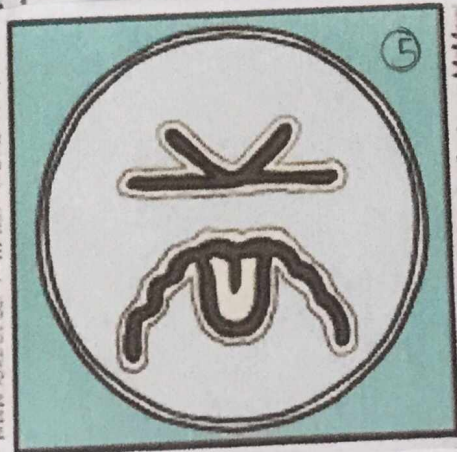
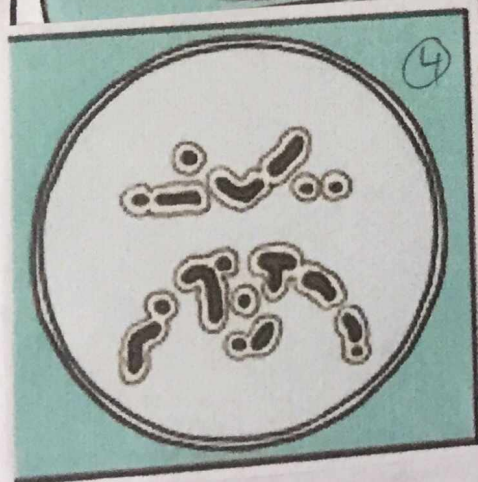
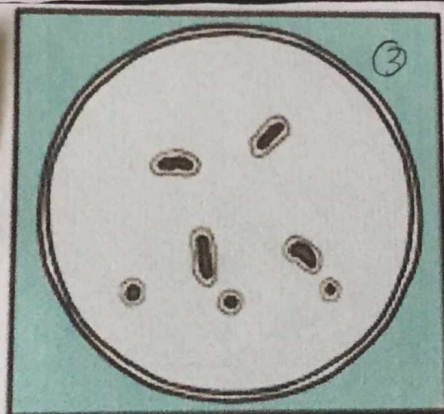
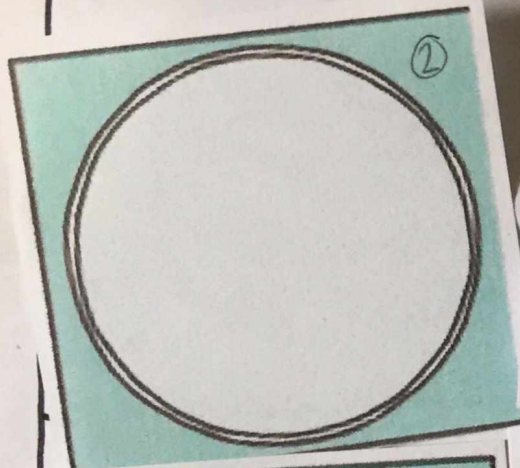
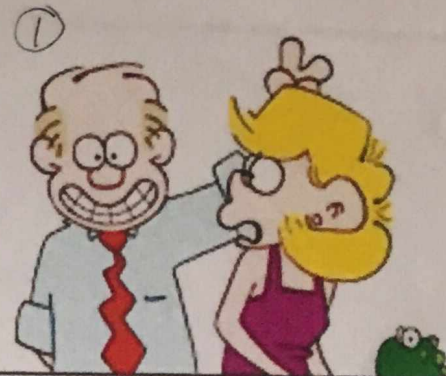
FIG. 3-4 Mutt & Jeff by Patrick McDonnell. Copyright © 1996 by Patrick McDonnell. Reprinted by special permission of King Features Syndicate.

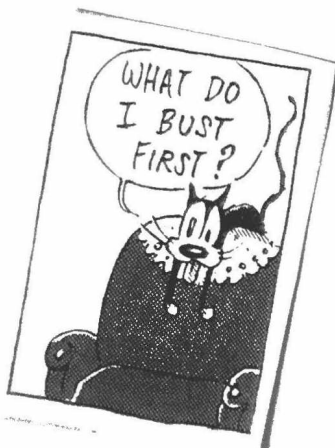
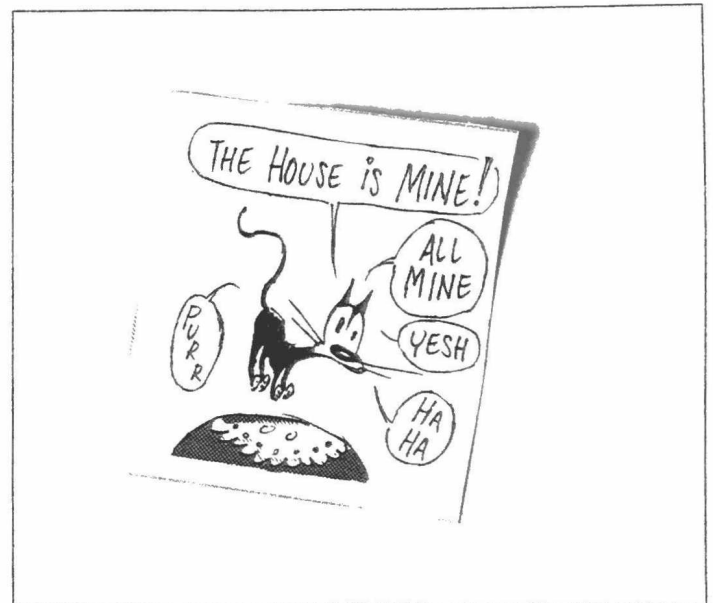




# FoxTrot

by Bill Amend





## **Lesson 2: Under the Floorboards**

### **Objective:**

*Cause and Effect (comprehension skill):* Students analyze why (cause) and how (effect) characters, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a graphic novel when expressing those changes they notice between the frames’ “gutters.”

*Making Inferences (comprehension strategies):* Students will closely read a graphic novel to determine what the “gutter” transitions are, and to make logical inferences about the story from it.

*Use of Gutters (graphic novel element):* Students cite specific “gutter” transitions when writing and speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text. Analyze the structure of action-to action, subject-to-subject, and scene-to-scene transitions and how they relate to each other as a whole.

### **Common Core State Standards:**

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1

Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.3

Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact

over the course of a text.

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.5

Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

### **Background Information:**

This background information is for you, the teacher, to quickly get familiar with the basic theory behind the “choice of frame” in a graphic novel.

Comic creators use choice of frames in two ways. The frame choice itself, this is what was taught in Lesson 1. As well as the use of gutters, this is the space between the separate frames, and is what this lesson will concentrate on (Strum, 2013). The action in comics happen in the gutters, so gutters become the invisible art of graphic novel storytelling that the creator chooses to make. The readers must collaborate with the creator to “read” the visible and invisible, much like a dance between the two. In order to read the visible frames then the invisible gutters successfully, readers use closure (McCloud, 1993) .

Closure is when the readers observes only part of an image inside the frame, but believes that it is a representation of the whole (McCloud, 1993). For example if you look at the frame below: Readers make closure by understanding that the man’s arm is not in two parts but his elbow just can’t be seen in the frame; just like the rest of his body, he still has legs and feet that are below him. We believe the whole person is there but are only seeing the parts the comic creator chooses to show us.





When multiple frames are placed in sequence the readers become a willing and conscious collaborator to communicate the storyline, and closure is the agent of change, time, and motion (McCloud, 1993). The transitions of change, time and motion in comics happen within the gutters, requires readers to see cause and effects of each panel, and make inferences about the action in the gutter space.

Most panel-to-panel transitions in comics can be placed in several categories; all require a different level of closure from the readers (Strum, 2013). This lesson will focus on the three most common types of transitions found in the gutters of comics (McCloud, 1993). The first, and most common transition type, is action-to-action. This features a single subject- making distinct action progressions, and requires only a little closure from the reader (see Action-to-Action Samples in master copies for visual examples). The second most common transition is subject-to subject. The subjects and point of views change but still stay within the same scene or idea (see Subject-to-Subject Samples in master copies for visual examples). The reader's involvement in closure must increase to make these transitions meaningful to the story. The third most common gutter transition is scene-to-scene (see Scene-to-Scene Samples in master copies for visual examples). Greater deductive reasoning and inferencing is needed because the transitions happen

across a significant distance of time and/or space.

Comic creator Scott McCloud explains gutters wonderfully, “Within frames of a comic information is only conveyed visually, but *BETWEEN* the frames none of our senses are required at all, which is why *ALL* of our senses can be engaged!” (Scott McCloud, P.89)

### **Materials:**

- Copies of Explorer: The Mystery Boxes, edited by Kazu Kibuishi (enough for pairs to share the book).
- [Interactive poster](#) of the weekly goal for students to focus and learn (see master copies for example/update)
- [Making Inferences with Gutter Booklet](#) (enough for each student, use the template to create, cover page and 3 blank frame pages)
- [Action-to-Action Samples](#) (use on day 2)
- Action-to-Action [Teacher Example](#) (use on day 2)
- [Subject-to-Subject Samples](#) (use on day 3)
- Subject-to-Subject [Teacher Example](#) (use on day 3)
- [Scene-to-Scene Samples](#) (use on day 4)
- Scene-to-Scene [Teacher Example](#) (use on day 4)
- Samples of [student created work](#) (use for teacher’s reference)

### **Daily Lessons:**

Day 1:

Use the poster to introduce this week's objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, "I can understand the cause and effects by making inferences when looking at the use of gutter transitions in a graphic novel."

- Tip: Teach that the word inferences means "guesses" and that reader's guesses are confirmed by the cause and effect between the two panels.

Read aloud "Under the Floorboards" (p.4-21) to students. When reading a graphic novel as a read aloud make sure to read the words and pictures, explaining the sequence of the plot aloud. Also, point to each frame you are reading, and have students point to the same frame as they follow along.

While reading aloud make sure to use the following examples to teach about the use of gutters. As a teacher use digression on which examples you want to point out, or others you notice yourself, based on your students comprehension level, your connection to the story, etc.

- P. 6-7: Before reading show students the black gutters between the frames and explain that when reading the pictures you will also be sharing guesses, or inferences, on what happened between the panels to tell the story in more detail today. Have students trace the gutters with their fingers to check for understanding of what gutters are.
- P. 6, frames 1-3: First we are outside looking at a house, then end up inside the house seeing a sleeping girl (this is an example of scene-to-scene change).
- P. 6-7, frames 3-6: The girl is asleep, then wakes up because she hears a tapping sound under the bed. She looks under the bed and sees a

floorboard that is sticking up. The girl gets out of bed and lifts up the floorboard to see what is hiding underneath it (this is an example of action-to-action transition).

- P. 7, last 3 frames: we see the girl reaching for the box and paper in the hole. The girl is reading what is on the paper. And we get to read the letter she read on the paper (this is an example of subject-to-subject closure).

Do not introduce the transition types to students today. Just read the graphic novel aloud so those students become familiar with the story, and model inferencing what actions (the cause and effect) are happening in the gutters too.

## Day 2:

Use the poster to review this week's objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, "I can understand the cause and effects by making inferences when looking at the use of gutter transitions in a graphic novel."

Introduce action-to-action gutter transitions. Use the Action-to-Action Samples in the master copies (McCloud, 1993). This can be displayed as a poster, handout, or on a doc-cam. Explain how each panel change features a single subject making distinct action progressions, and requires only a little inferencing from the reader.

➤ Tip: limit to 5 min.

Ask student to find, and describe, specific examples of action-to-action transitions in the gutter spaces between panels in this week's graphic novel story "Under the Floorboards." Here are some following examples to share with students at the beginning, or places to suggest struggling students go to for more assistance (Kibuishi, 2011).

- P. 11, 12, and 14, gutter between frames 1&2: The girl's facial reactions to what is being said or done in the previous or proceeding frame.
  - P. 18, gutter between frames 3-5: Shows the action of the clay doll become more lifelike by forming a mouth and speaking for the first time.
  - P. 20, all gutters between the frames: First row shows the storm clearing, second row shows door knocks getting louder, last row shows the girl's reaction to changes in the door knocks.
- Tip: Limit to 10-15 min.
  - Tip: Give students a few min. to silently find examples, and then require all students to share one idea to check for understanding of all students.
  - Re-teaching Tip: When students share examples in the graphic novel have them count and say what frame number they want the group to look at; this will reinforce lesson 1 "Choice of Frame" objectives. Have all students in the group point to the same frame.

Pass out the Making Inferences with Gutter Booklet (see master copies) to each student. Students will create one 3-panel strip of action-to-action gutter transitions (Cray, 2004). Provide are 10 actions to illustrate from beginning, middle, and end; modify as needed for the demographic and age group of your students.

- |                       |                            |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Kick a goal        | 6. Pick up a phone ringing |
| 2. Make a sandwich    | 7. Lick an ice cream cone  |
| 3. Cross the street   | 8. Dress for winter recess |
| 4. Slide down a slide | 9. Build a Lego tower      |
| 5. Dig a hole         | 10. Airplane landing       |

See the Action-to-Action Teacher Example (master copies) of what the students' daily assessment should model. Monitor, assist, and check in with individual students that their own work follows the action-to-action transition. If it does not, point out that the subject never changes; just what they are doing changes in each panel (McCloud, 1993). Help them fix mistakes.

- Differentiation Tip: Teachers may either assign certain actions. This offers a greater challenge to students, and provides more examples to discuss and look at later.
- Differentiation Tip: Teachers let students choose their own action to illustrate. This allows the student to pick an action they can already relate to, and provides the opportunity to look at the same action from different viewpoints if multiple students chose the same action.
- Tip: Limit 15-20 min.

If time allows, either have students share with the whole group, or a partner, their 3-panel action-to-action sequence in order to practice reading aloud the gutters in comics.

### Day 3:

Use the poster to review this week's objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, "I can understand the cause and effects by making inferences when looking at the use of gutter transitions in a graphic novel."

Introduce subject-to-subject gutter transitions. Use the Subject-to-Subject Samples in the master copies (McCloud, 1993). This can be displayed as a poster, handout, or on a doc-cam. Explain how in each panel the subjects and point of views

change, but still stay within the same scene or idea (Strum, 2013). The reader's involvement in inferencing must increase to make these transitions meaningful to the story.

➤ Tip: limit to 5 min.

Ask student to find, and describe, specific examples of subject-to-subject transitions in the gutter spaces between panels in this week's graphic novel story "Under the Floorboards." Here are some following examples to share with students at the beginning, or places to suggest struggling students go to for more assistance (Kibuishi, 2011).

- P. 10, all frames: Frames play between girl and wax doll showing the doll coming to life and the girl watch that happen.
- P. 12, all frames: Frames play between the girl's and wax doll's reaction to the chore of sweeping.

➤ Tip: Limit to 10-15 min.

➤ Tip: Give students a few min. to silently find examples, and then require all students to share one idea to check for understanding of all students.

➤ Re-teaching Tip: When students share examples in the graphic novel have them count and say what frame number they want the group to look at; this will reinforce lesson 1 "Choice of Frame" objectives. Have all students in the group point to the same frame.

Pass out the Making Inferences with Gutter Booklet (see master copies) to each student. Students will create one 3-panel strip of subject-to-subject gutter transitions (Cray, 2004). Provide are the same 10 actions from day 2 to illustrate from beginning,

middle, and end; modify as needed for the demographic and age group of your students.

- |                       |                            |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Kick a goal        | 6. Pick up a phone ringing |
| 2. Make a sandwich    | 7. Lick an ice cream cone  |
| 3. Cross the street   | 8. Dress for winter recess |
| 4. Slide down a slide | 9. Build a Lego tower      |
| 5. Dig a hole         | 10. Airplane landing       |

See the Subject-to-Subject Teacher Example (master copies) of what the students' daily assessment should model. Monitor, assist, and check in with individual students that their own work follows the subject-to-subject transition. If it does not, point out that the subjects and views change but the action does not (McCloud, 1993). Help them fix mistakes.

- Differentiation Tip: Teachers may either assign certain actions. This offers a greater challenge to students, and provides more examples to discuss and look at later.
- Differentiation Tip: Teachers let students choose their own action to illustrate. This allows the student to pick an action they can already relate to, and provides the opportunity to look at the same action from different viewpoints if multiple students chose the same action.
- Tip: Have students use the same action they illustrated on day 1. They will illustrate it in a completely different way today, and really get to see how action-to-action, and subject-to subject look different.
- Tip: Limit 15-20 min.

If time allows, either have students share with the whole group, or a partner, their



3-panel subject-to-subject sequence in order to practice reading aloud the gutters in comics.

#### Day 4:

Use the poster to review this week's objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, "I can understand the cause and effects by making inferences when looking at the use of gutter transitions in a graphic novel."

Introduce scene-to-scene gutter transitions. Use the Scene-to-Scene Samples in the master copies (McCloud, 1993). This can be displayed as a poster, or on a doc-cam. Explain how in each panel greater deductive reasoning and inferencing is needed because the transitions happen across a significant distance of time and/or space (Strum, 2013).

➤ Tip: limit to 5 min.

Ask student to find, and describe, specific examples of scene-to-scene transitions in the gutter spaces between panels in this week's graphic novel story "Under the Floorboards." Here are some following examples to share with students at the beginning, or places to suggest struggling students go to for more assistance (Kibuishi, 2011).

- P. 15, gutter between frames 3&4: Readers are in the mother's room during the day then transition to the girl's room at night.
- P. 17, all frames: Each frame shows a different part of the house (space) throughout one day (time). Readers see a scene in the hallway, kitchen, bedroom, living room, and mother's room.

➤ Tip: Limit to 10-15 min.

➤ Tip: Give students a few min. to silently find examples, and then require

all students to share one idea to check for understanding of all students.

- Re-teaching Tip: When students share examples in the graphic novel have them count and say what frame number they want the group to look at; this will reinforce lesson 1 “Choice of Frame” objectives. Have all students in the group point to the same frame.

Pass out the Making Inferences with Gutter Booklet (see master copies) to each student. Students will create one 3-panel strip of scene-to-scene gutter transitions (Cary, 2004). Provide are 6 new event to illustrate from beginning, middle, and end; modify as needed for the demographic and age group of your students.

- |  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Plane trip to a village                 | 4. Views from your drive to school   |
| 2. Growing up as a baby, kid, adult        | 5. Changes from summer, winter, fall |
| 3. What 3 different people do after school | 6. People looking for a lost dog     |

See the Scene-to-Scene Teacher Example (master copies) of what the students’ daily assessment should model. Monitor, assist, and check in with individual students that their own work follows the scene-to-scene transition. If it does not, point out that each panel needs to show a different time or space (McCloud, 1993). Help them fix mistakes.

- Differentiation Tip: Teachers may either assign certain events. This offers a greater challenge to students, and provides more examples to discuss and look at later.
- Differentiation Tip: Teachers let students choose their own events to illustrate. This allows the student to pick an event they can already relate to, and provides the opportunity to look at the same event from different viewpoints if multiple students chose the same event.

➤ Tip: Limit 15-20 min.

If time allows, either have students share with the whole group, or a partner, their 3-panel scene-to-scene sequence in order to practice reading aloud the gutters in comics.

### **Assessments:**

Day 2: (Formative) Students find and inference an action-to-action gutter example from the weekly graphic novel correctly.

(Summative) Students correctly create a 3-panel example of an action-to-action transition to model cause and effect within a short event.

Day 3: (Formative) Students find and inference a subject-to-subject gutter example from the weekly graphic novel correctly.

(Summative) Students correctly create a 3-panel example of a subject-to-subject transition to model cause and effect within a short event.

Day 4: (Formative) Students find and inference a scene-to-scene gutter example from the weekly graphic novel correctly.

(Summative) Students correctly create a 3-panel example of a scene-to-scene transition to model cause and effect within a short event.

### **Master Copies Index:**

Please refer to the following pages that correspond to the Lesson 2 Materials section of the Teacher's Manual for all the master copies teachers will need to prep for the lessons.

# EXPLORER: <sup>The</sup> Mystery Boxes

Comprehension  
Skill:  
"I can..."

Comprehension  
Strategies:  
"By..."

Graphic  
Novel  
Element

Story:

Sequence  
Events

Understand  
Text  
Structure

Choice  
of  
Frame

Whatzit!

Cause  
and  
Effect

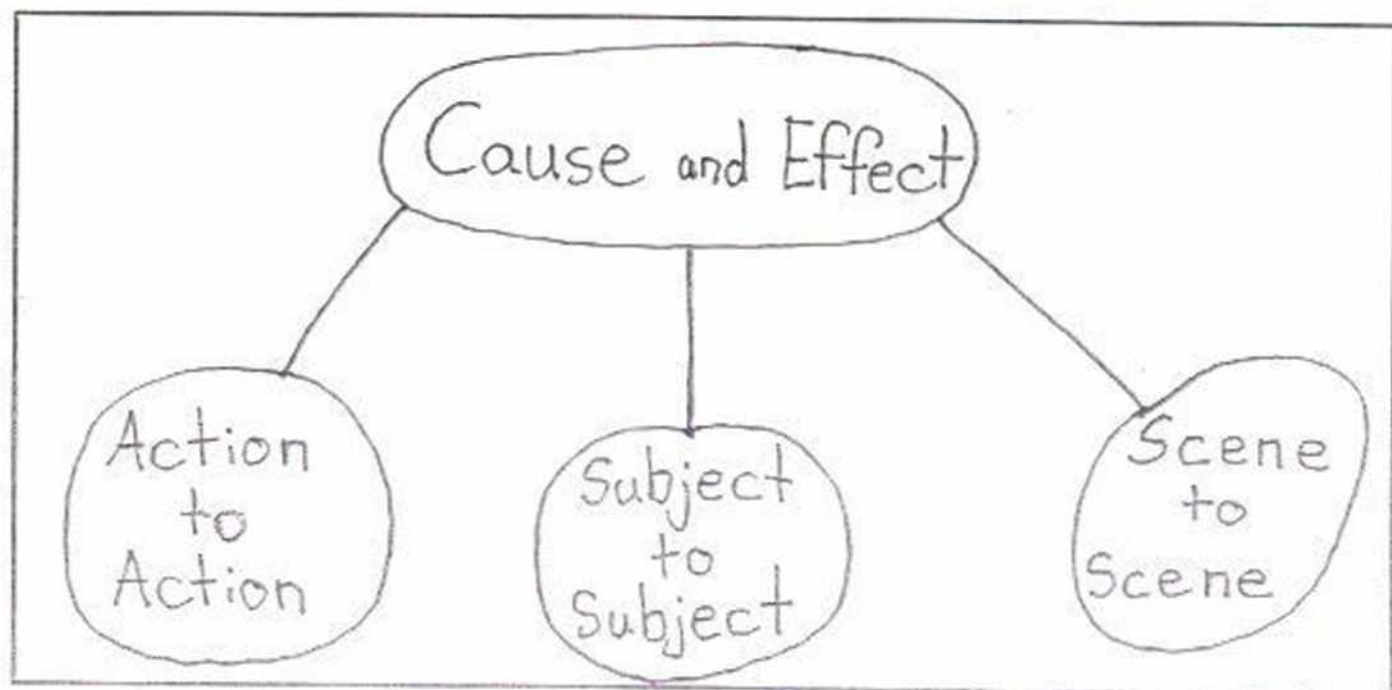
Making  
Inferences

Use of  
Gutters  
Types of  
Transitions

Under the  
Floorboards



# Making Inferences with Gutters



|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |



Action-to-Action

# Action-to-Action: A Phone Call



The phone is ringing.



The girl picks up the phone.



She hold it to her ear to talk.





Subject-to-Subject



# Subject-to-Subject: A Phone Call



A man at his desk working



The phone behind him rings.



He picked it up to talk to Alice



Scene - to - Scene

# Scene-to-Scene: The Lost Dog



A kid can't find her dog

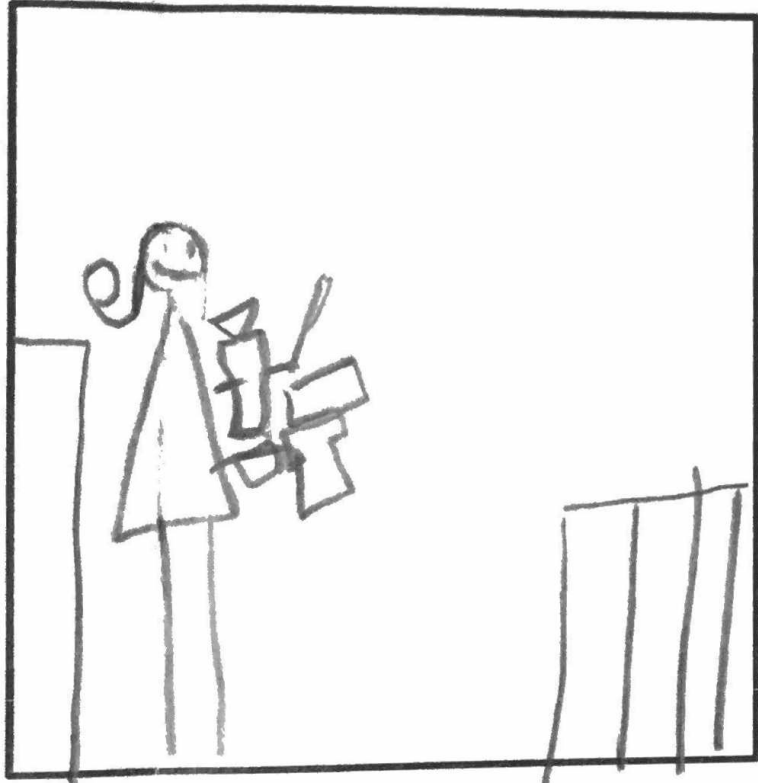


She puts fliers up to find him.

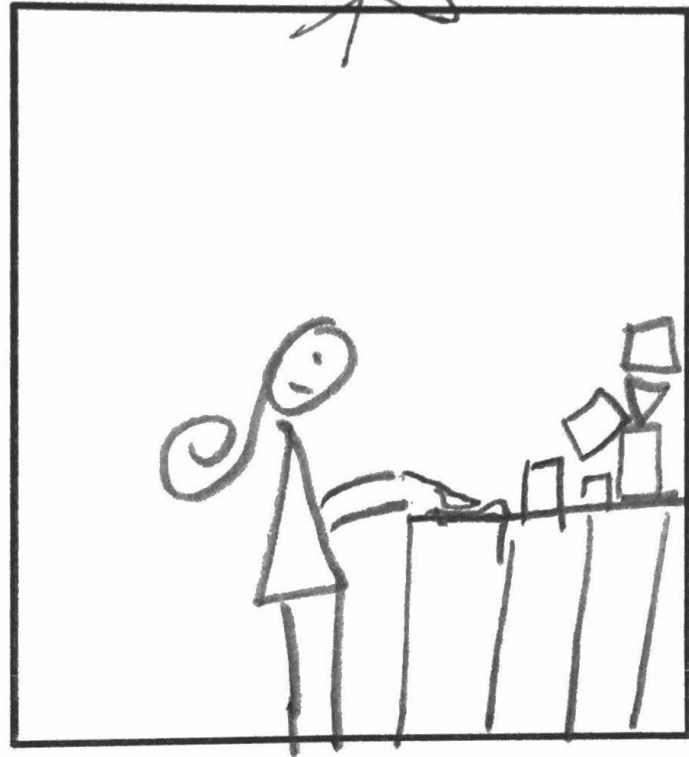


It works and the dog and girl are together

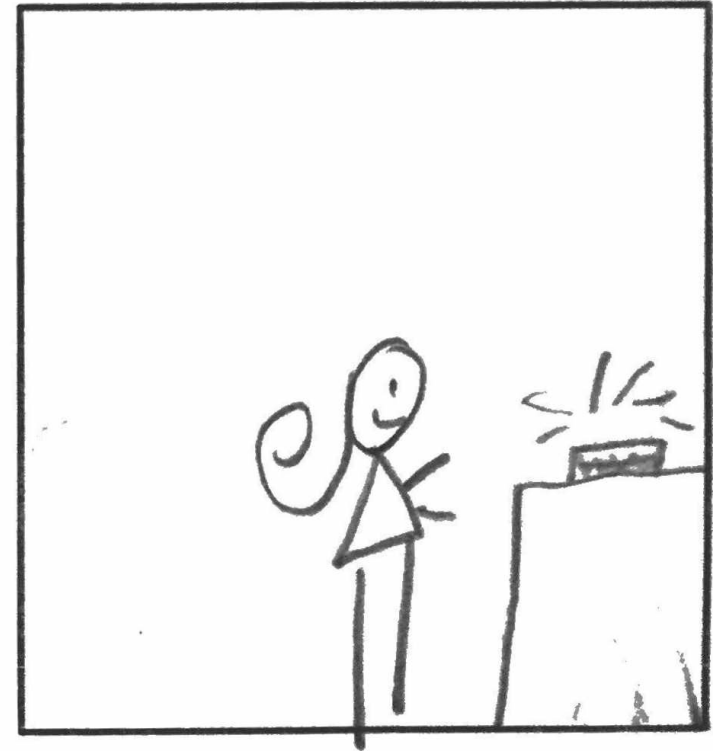
# Action-to-Action. Make a Sandwich



the girl is  
getting stuff  
for a sandwich.

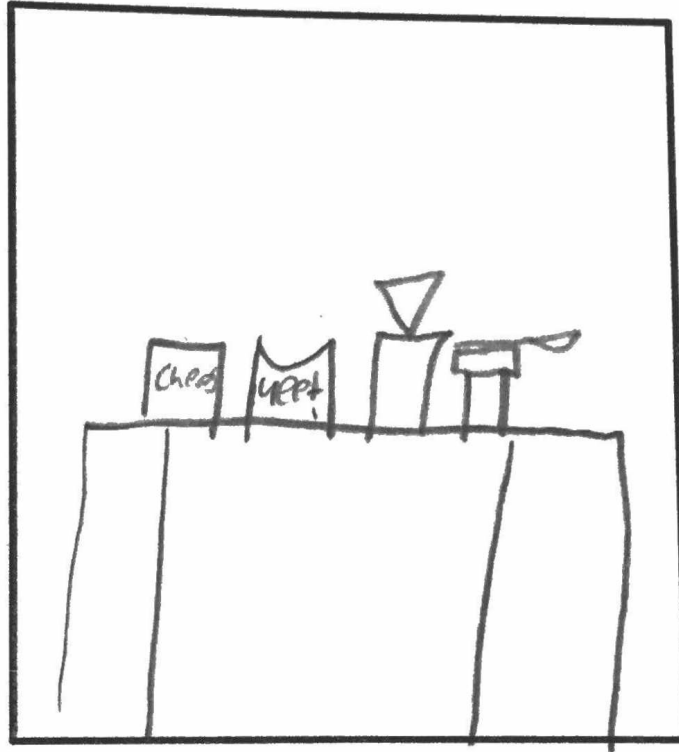


the girl puts  
the ingredients  
on the sandwich.



the girl gets  
the sandwich.

# Subject-to-Subject Make a sandwich



the girl will make a sandwich again

these are the ingredients

# Scene to ~~star~~ scene Growing up



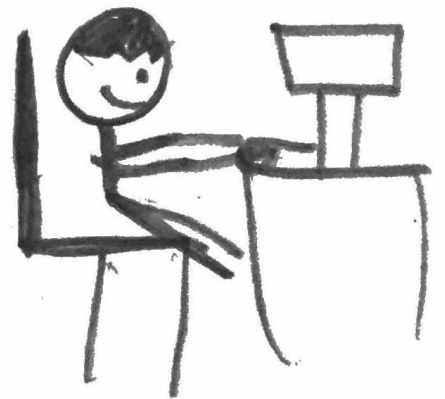
baby  
sleeping

6 Years later



kid doing  
homework

17 Years later



Adult doing  
work

### **Lesson 3: The Soldier's Daughter**

#### **Objective:**

*Describe plot and story structure (comprehension skill):* Students determine the main idea of a graphic novel and analyze the development by summarizing key supporting details and ideas. Students analyze how the words and pictures develop and interact over the course of a graphic novel.

*Understand text structure (comprehension strategies):* Students analyze the structure of types of word bubbles in a graphic novel and comic strip to see how the word bubbles relate to, and explain, the whole story.

*Choice of words (graphic novel element):* Students interpret speech bubbles, thought bubbles, and narrative boxes in a graphic novel, and analyze how those specific word choices shape the meaning or tone of the story.

#### **Common Core State Standards:**

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2

Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.3

Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.



- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.4

Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.5

Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

### **Background Information:**

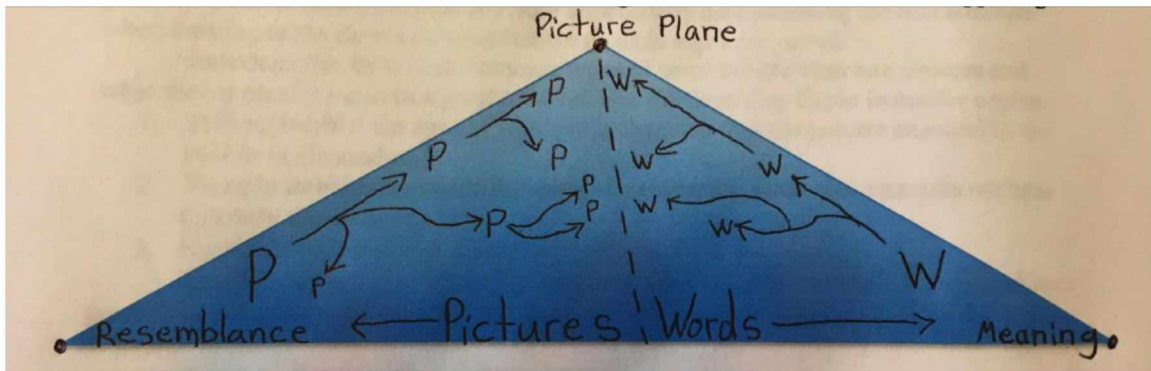
This background information is for you, the teacher, to quickly get familiar with the basic theory behind the “choice of words” in a graphic novel.

The earliest forms of a written language, from the Incas to the Egyptians, started as stylized pictures. Then written language progressed to only representing sounds and lost most of the visual representation, so much so that today most people view literature and art as separate forms of communication. Yet picture and words still change and develop into new forms (McCloud, 1993). Pictures and artwork, for example, in the late 1600’s works like Rembrandt were very realistic and specific. Then the art movement changed by the 1900’s to Expressionism and Cubism where the art was no longer realistic but back to symbolic. Words have gone through a similar trajectory in the opposite direction (McCloud, 1993). Works by Dante or Shakespeare are classic examples of meaning being expressed by elaborate words. Today we see words be used in special fonts, poem forms, and ads in a way to resemble a picture. Both pictures and words have



started to borrow resemblance and meaning from each other again, and this makes the medium of comics so powerful because it naturally combines the two (McCloud, 1993).

The diagram below is a visual of this happening.



Combining pictures with words in comics can be done in a number of ways. Here are some common ways that explain why and how certain word bubble choices are used. First there are “word specific” combinations, when pictures illustrate but don’t add to completing the story (McCloud, 1993). The use of the narration box helps complete the text. Then there are “picture specific” combinations because the words to little more than add a soundtrack to a visually told sequence (McCloud, 1993). Another type is the “additive” combination, when the words amplify or elaborate on an image or vice versa (McCloud, 1993). Both “picture specific” and “additive” combinations make good use of talking and thought bubbles. The most common type of word/picture combination is “interdependence.” They go hand in hand to convey an idea that could not be expresses by the words or pictures alone (McCloud, 1993). All three types of word bubble choice are used interchangeably for this combination. A good rule of thumb to keep in mind is: the more that is said with words the more the pictures can be freed to the creative

imagination and vice versa (McCloud, 1993).

### **Materials:**

- Copies of [Explorer: The Mystery Boxes](#), edited by Kazu Kibuishi (enough for pairs to share the book).
- [Interactive poster](#) of the weekly goal for students to focus and learn (see master copies for example/update)
- [Speech Bubble](#) Cue Card (use on day 1)
- [Thought Bubble](#) Cue Card (use on day 1)
- [Narration Box](#) Cue Card (use on day 1)
- Soldier's Daughter [P.81 Lesson Example](#)
- Soldier's Daughter [P.81 Template](#)
- Soldier's Daughter [P.83 Template](#) (copy enough for pairs to work with)
- Soldier's Daughter [P.91 Template](#) (copy enough for pairs to work with)
- Choice of Words [Extra Practice 1](#) (copy enough for individuals to work with)
- Choice of Words [Extra Practice 2](#) (copy enough for individuals to work with)
- Samples of [student created work](#) (use for teacher's reference)

### **Daily Lessons:**

#### Day 1:

Use the poster to introduce this week's objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, "I can describe the plot and story structure by understanding the text structure when looking at the choice of word bubble types in a graphic novel."

Introduce the three most common types of word bubble structure choices and what they typically mean in a graphic novel. See the three Cue Cards in master copies (Brown, 2013).

1. Talking bubble: the spoken words of a character that the pointer attached to the bubble is directed at.
2. Thought bubble: the inside thoughts of a character, other characters do not hear this only the reader does.
3. Narration box: narrator telling more details about the plot

Read aloud the “The Soldier’s Daughter” (p. 76-93) to students. When reading a graphic novel as a read aloud make sure to read the words and pictures, explaining the sequence of the plot aloud. Also, point to each frame you are reading, and have students point to the same frame as they follow along.

While reading aloud make sure to use the following example to teach about some of the common word bubble choices the creator used and how they are structured (text structure) to help the readers understand the plot (story structure) in a graphic novel (Kibuishi, 2011). As a teacher use digression on which examples you want to point out, or others you notice yourself, based on your students’ comprehension level, your connection to the story, etc.

- P. 78, all frames: The whole page uses the narration box to develop the plot and conflict of the story.
- P. 80, frame 3: Read the spoken word bubbles straight down. This shows a conversation between the brother and sister, and the brothers response to the sister pointing a sword at him in the picture.

- P. 82, frames 2&3: Stop to point out that the creator is using the narration box in different ways. Frame 2 the words narrate the setting and plot, but in frame 3 it acts like a thought bubble of the girl.
- P. 86-90. The creator used black thought bubbles for the father's words, but the daughter can hear his thoughts, and responds to them in white spoken word bubbles.

### Day 2 and 3:

Use the poster to review this week's objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, "I can describe the plot and story structure by understanding the text structure when looking at the choice of word bubble types in a graphic novel."

Reread "The Soldier's Daughter" with the group of students. Today students will practice filling in words for wordless frames with by using different word bubble structures, with the goal that the words have interdependence with the picture. Stop reading at a wordless frame; hold up one of the Cue Cards. Model "filling in" the words for that part of the plot based on the structure type of word bubble (Brown, 2013). Do this a few times. Here are a few examples and suggestions.

- P. 79, frame 1: Narration box, "Finally the rain stopped."
- P. 79, frame 7: Thought bubble, "This is the most serious thing I have ever said in my life."
- P. 80, frame 6: Talking bubble, "Captain Vaal's army is getting closer everyday, soon our home won't be safe."

After the teacher models the activity have individual students take turns reading a

page at a time, stopping at wordless frames. The teacher holds up one of the cue cards for that student to “fill in” (Brown, 2013). The student’s words should match the images and actions in the frame and continue the story correctly. The goal is that words have interdependence with the picture. Assist and correct if they are incorrect. Here are a few suggestions to prompt students with.

- P. 81, frame 4: Hold up the Thought Bubble Cue Card
  - P. 82, frame 1: Hold up the Thought Bubble Cue Card
  - P. 82, frame 5: Hold up the Narration Box Cue Card
  - P. 83, frame 6: Hold up the Thought Bubble Cue Card
  - P. 83, frame 9: Hold up the Talking Bubble Cue Card
  - P. 84, frame 6: Hold up the Narration Box Cue Card
  - P. 85, frame 5: Hold up the Talking Bubble Cue Card
- Differentiation Tip: Provide a greater choice to students and let them pick what cue card they want to use to fill in wordless frames.
  - Tip: This activity was challenging for 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students and took two 30 min. lessons and two rereading for the students to really feel confident in “filling in” their own words.

#### Day 4:

Use the poster to review this week’s objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, “I can describe the plot and story structure by understanding the text structure when looking at the choice of word bubble types in a graphic novel.”

Today students will use “The Soldier's Daughter” P.81, 83, and 91 Templates (see

master copies) to fill in the blank word bubbles and create a new story for the page (Cary, 2004). Model how to do this with the whole group using P. 81 template (see Soldier's Daughter P.81 Lesson Example in master copies for final product). Work collaboratively with the students to add words in the bubbles that make a new story and relates to the images as well.

Pair students to work together on filling in the word bubbles for either P.83 or 91 templates to create a new story. The students' story should not repeat the words that were used in the original story. Students should be creating a story by using the structure of word bubbles to develop a plot for the images given (Brown, 2013). Check pair's work and, assist when needed. Once pairs correctly fill in their comic page they can individually work on a Choice of Words Extra Practice (see master copies). If time allows, let students choose a comic they wrote to read aloud to the group.

- Tip: Place students' work on a doc-cam when students are sharing their comics so everyone can see it.

### **Assessments:**

Day 2 and 3: (formative) Student's words match the images and actions in the frame and continue the story correctly with the text structure they were given.

Day 4: (summative) Students should be creating a story by using the structure of word bubbles to develop a plot for the images given.

### **Master Copies Index:**

Please refer to the following pages that correspond to the Lesson 3 Materials section of the Teacher's Manual for all the master copies teachers will need to prep for the weekly lessons.

# EXPLORER: <sup>The</sup> Mystery Boxes

Comprehension  
Skill:  
"I can..."

Comprehension  
Strategies:  
"By..."

Graphic  
Novel  
Element

Story:

Sequence  
Events

Understand  
Text  
Structure

Choice  
of  
Frame

Whatzit!

Cause  
and  
Effect

Making  
Inferences

Use of  
Gutters  
Types of  
Transitions

Under the  
Floorboards

Describe  
the plot  
and story  
structure

Understanding  
the  
Text  
Structure

Choice  
of  
Word  
Bubbles

The  
Soldier's  
Daughter

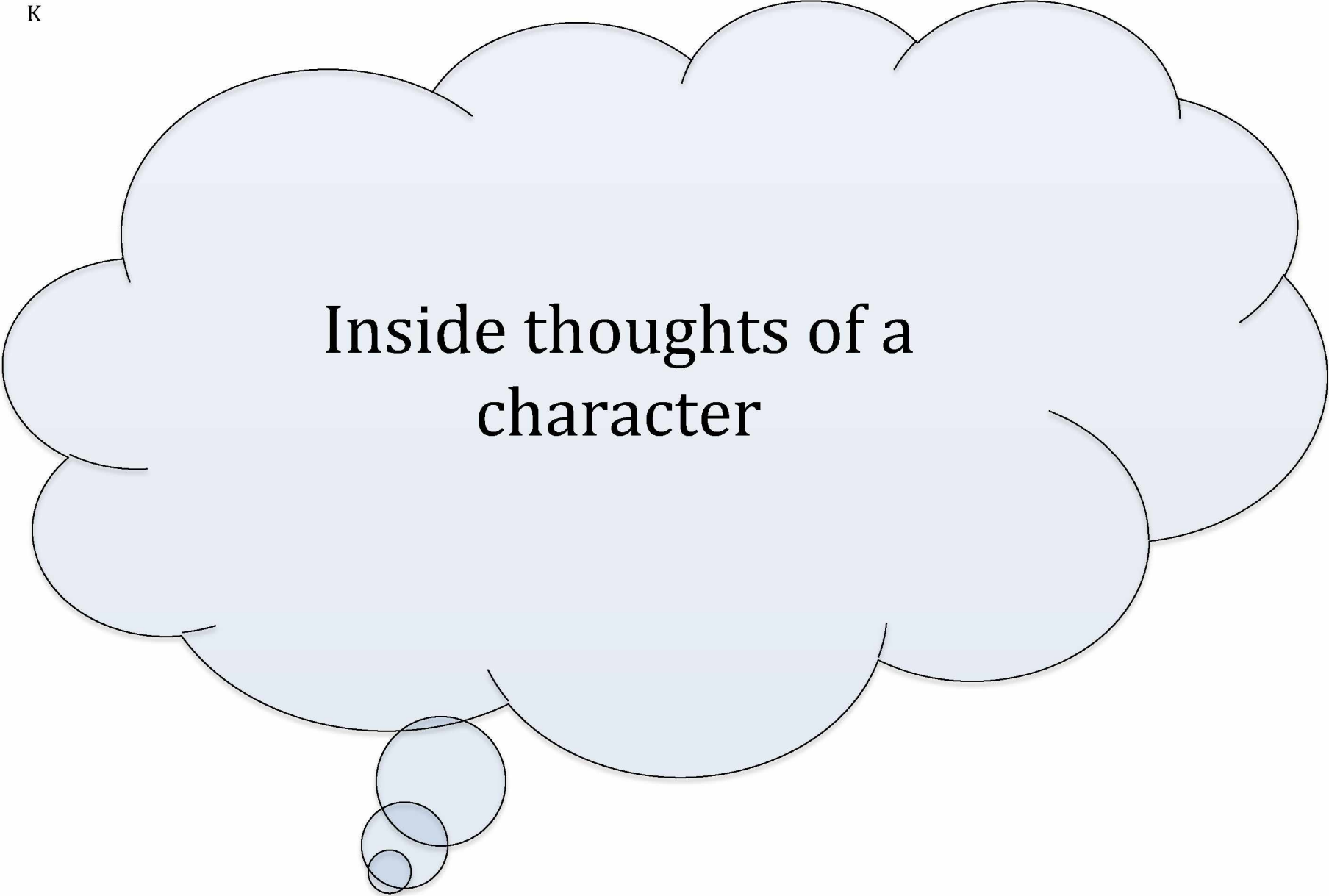






Spoken words of a character

K



Inside thoughts of a  
character

Narrator telling more plot details



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

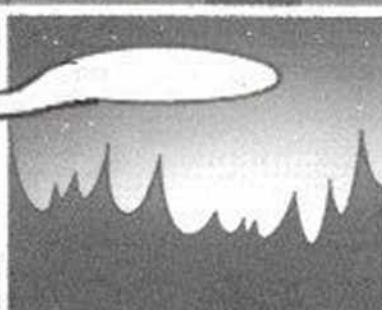
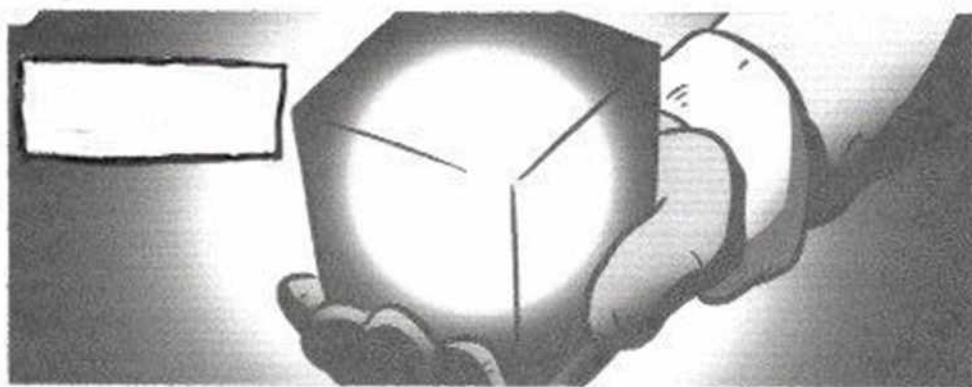
Whole group  
Teacher lead  
"Choice of  
words" activity

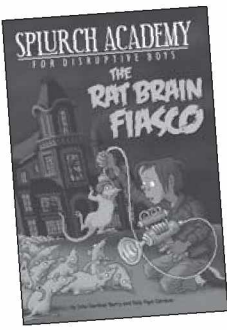












# SPLURCH ACADEMY

## FOR DISRUPTIVE BOYS

### CREATE A COMIC!



In the comic novel series Splurch Academy for Disruptive Boys, a combination of comic illustrations and traditional text is used to tell the story. Create your own comic by adding dialogue to the comic panels below! You can even continue the story by drawing additional panels on a separate sheet of paper.



**BOOKS**  
**4**  
**BOYS**

Visit [splurchacademy.com](http://splurchacademy.com) for more information and activities!  
Check out [penguin.com/books4boys](http://penguin.com/books4boys) for more great reads for boys.

Grosset & Dunlap • An Imprint of Penguin Group (USA) Inc. • [www.penguin.com/youngreaders](http://www.penguin.com/youngreaders)



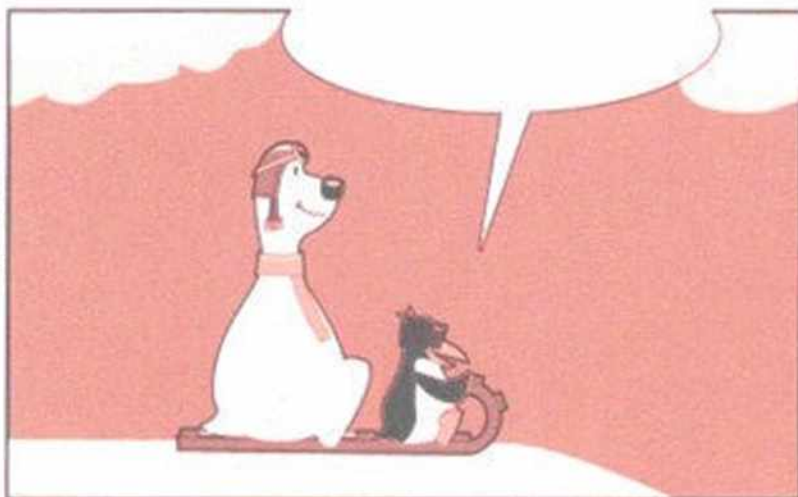
Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

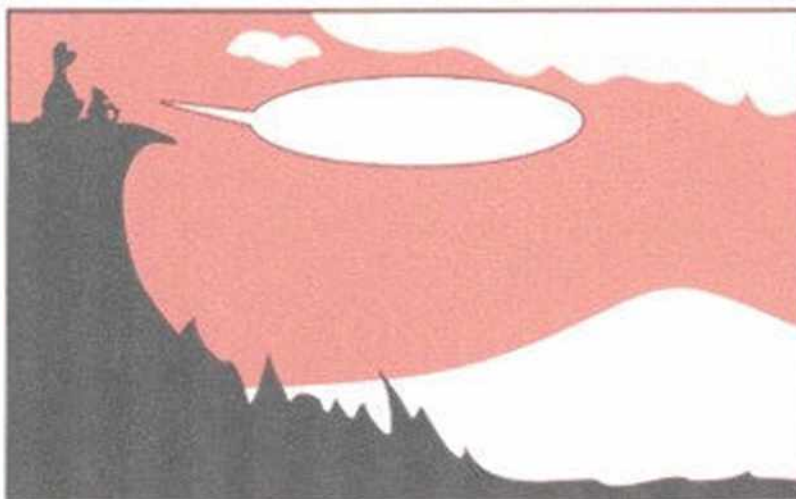
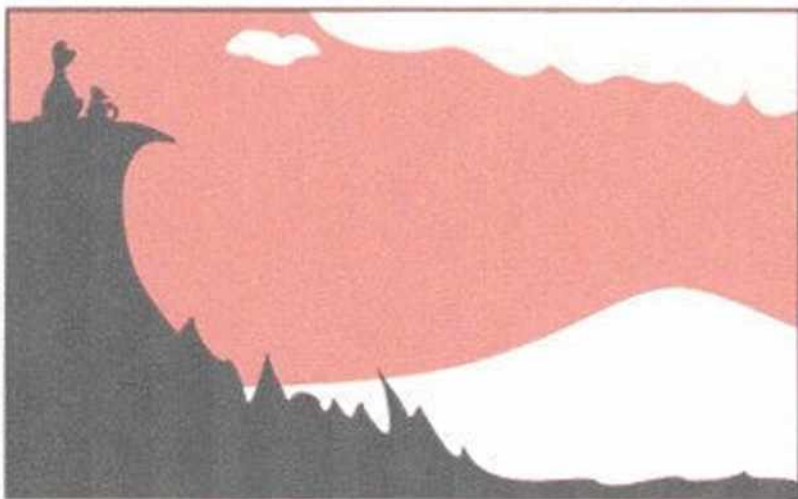
Directions:

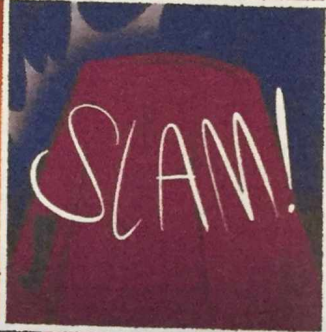
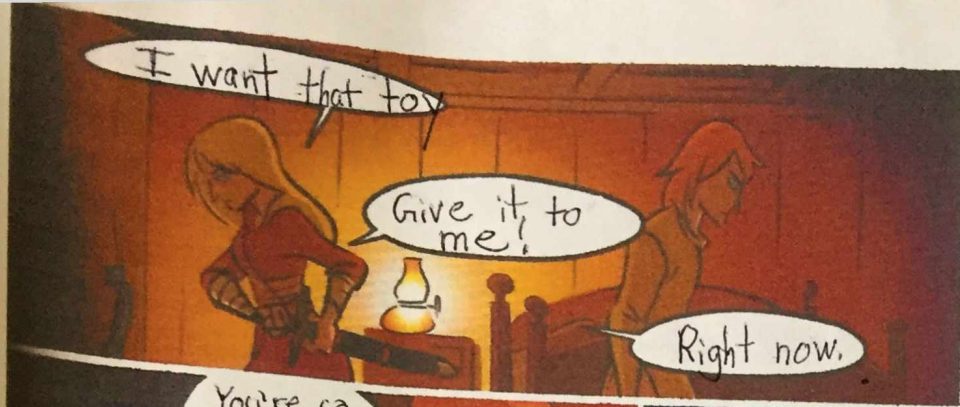
Create new dialog for this comic strip. Fill in the speech balloons with your ideas. Give your new comic strip a title.

by Tyler Martin



On The Rocks

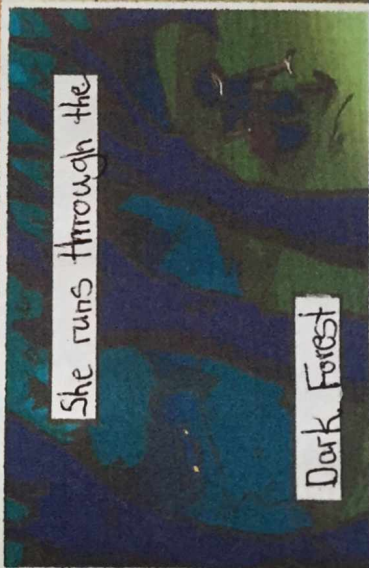
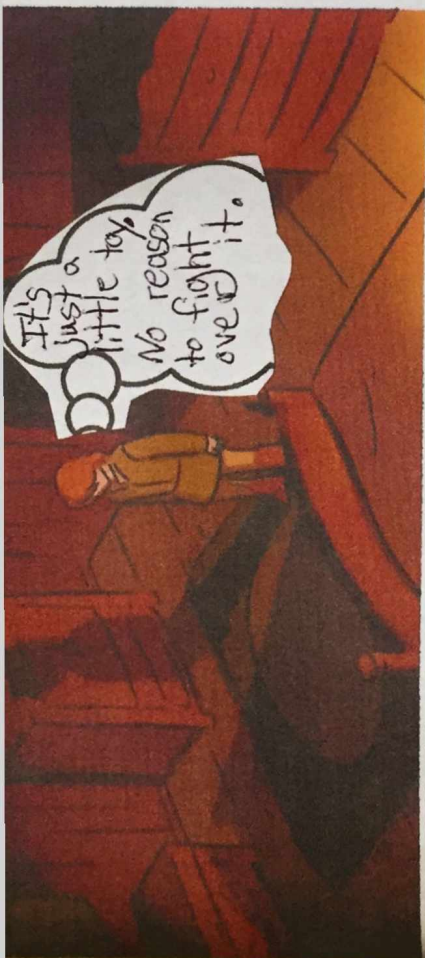




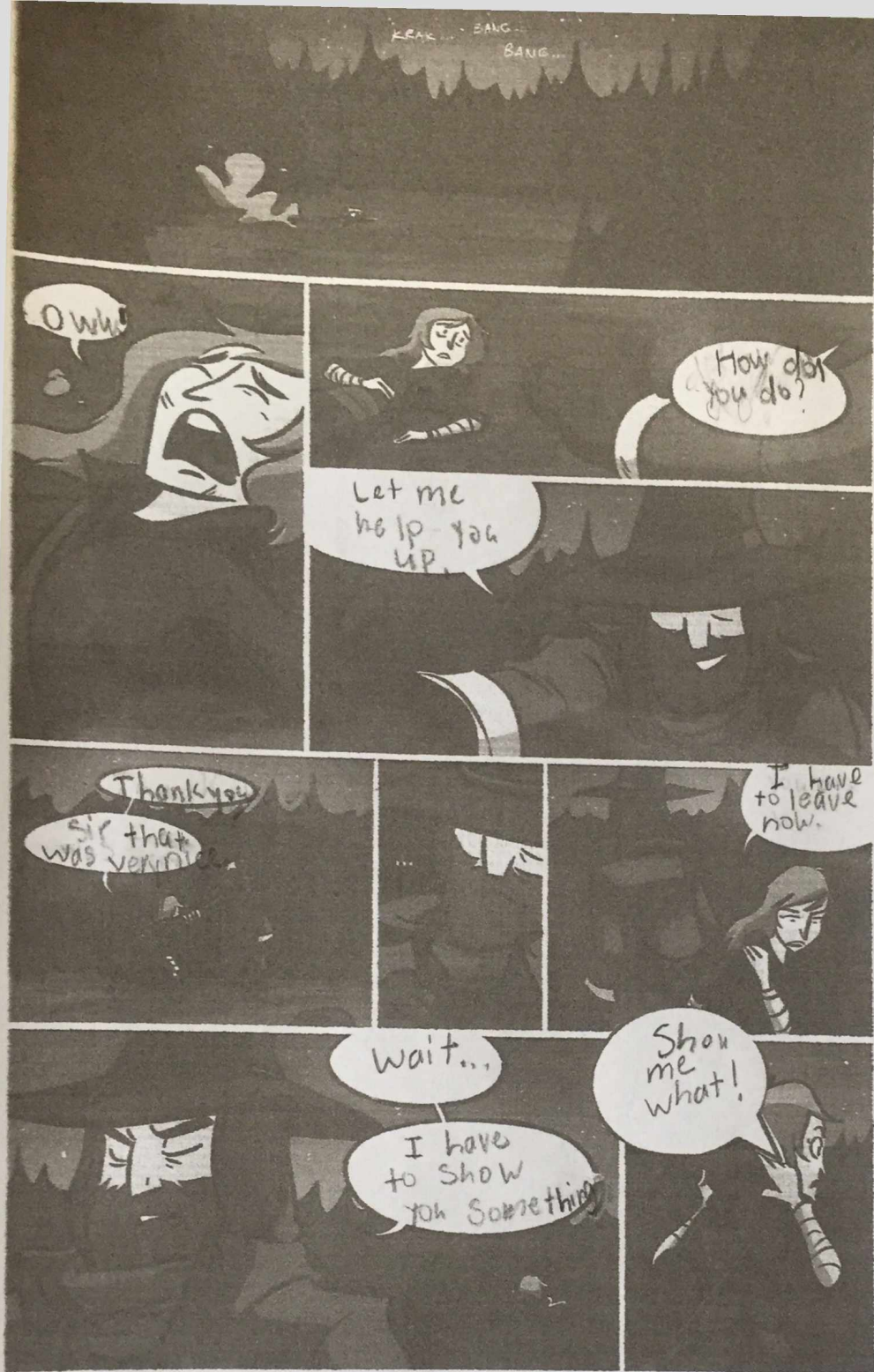
Name: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Whole group  
Teacher lead  
"Choice of words" activity







Paired Work  
examples of  
"Choice of  
Words" activity



Name \_\_\_\_\_

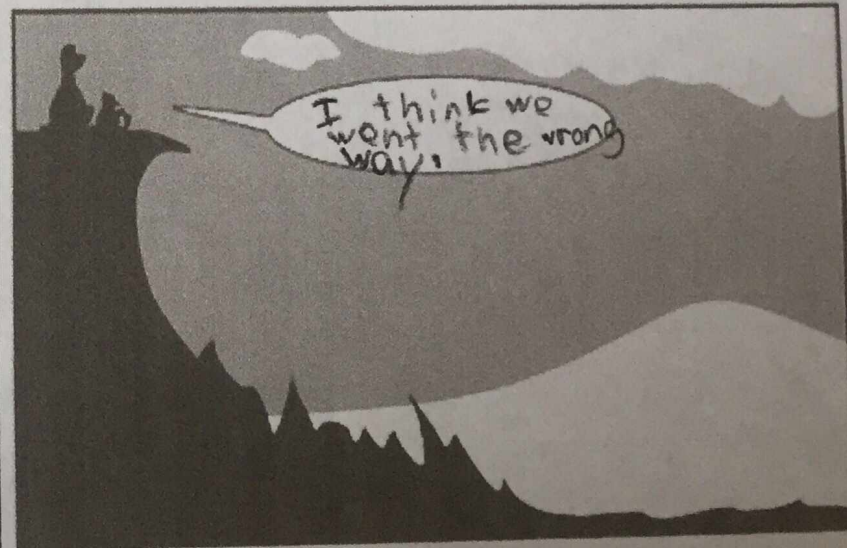
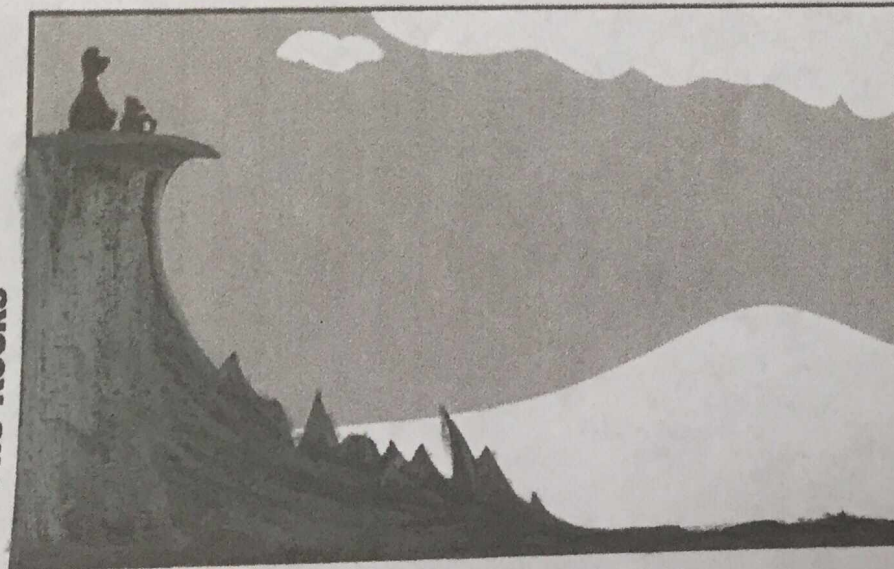
Independent  
Work examples  
"Choice of  
Words" Activity

Date 3/31/17

Directions:

Create new dialog for this comic strip. Fill in the speech balloons with your ideas. Give your new comic strip a title.

by Tyler Martin



On The Rocks

## **Lesson 4: The Butter Thief**

### **Objective:**

*Determine author's purpose/Identify the point of view (comprehension skill):* Students will assess how the point of view of the image within a frame shapes the content and understanding of a graphic novel or comic strip. Students will express what the comic creator wants the reader to understand from those points of views.

*Make inferences (comprehension strategies):* Students will closely read a graphic novel or comic strip to cite specific image details as evidence to make logical inferences from it, and make conclusions drawn from those images.

*Choice of Image (graphic novel element):* Students analyze the structure of images and their details in a graphic novel and comic strip to see how the images relate to, and help explain, the whole story.

### **Common Core State Standards:**

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1

Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.5

Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.6

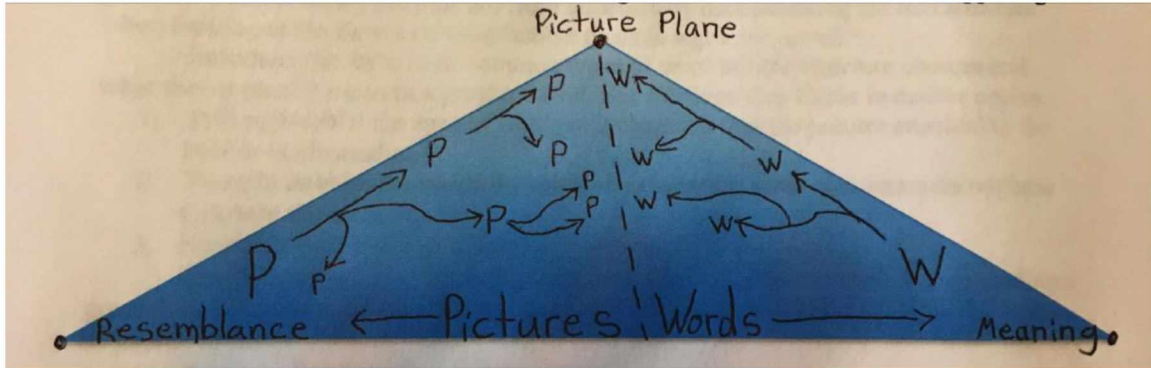
Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

### **Background Information:**

This background information is for you, the teacher, to quickly get familiar with the basic theory behind the “choice of image” in a graphic novel.

The earliest forms of a written language, from the Incas to the Egyptians, started as stylized pictures. Then written language progressed to only representing sounds and lost most of the visual representation, so much so that today most people view literature and art as separate forms of communication. Yet picture and words still change and develop into new forms (McCloud, 1993). For example, pictures and artwork in the late 1600's, works like Rembrandt, were very realistic and specific. Then the art movement changed by the 1900's to Expressionism and Cubism where the art was no longer realistic but back to symbolic. Words have gone through a similar trajectory in the opposite direction (McCloud, 1993). Works by Dante or Shakespeare are classic examples of meaning being expressed by elaborate words. Today we see words used in special fonts, poem forms, and ads in a way to resemble a picture. Both pictures and words have started to borrow resemblance and meaning from each other again, and this makes the medium of comics so powerful because it naturally combines the two (McCloud, 1993).

The diagram below is a visual of this happening.



A good rule of thumb to keep in mind is that the more that is said with words the more the pictures can be freed to the creative imagination and vice versa (McCloud, 1993). Comics that are “wordless” and made mostly of pictures provided the reader the opportunity to practice their creative use of words. When reading independently, this is done inside the mind. When reading aloud to a partner, or group, it provides a lot of opportunities for oral or written language building. This building happens in three steps of thinking, as described by Swain’s Comprehensible Output Hypothesis (2001), all that are used in the Day 3 Lesson.

Comprehensible Output Hypothesis is Swain’s theory that language learners need to deliver a comprehensible message in order for the learning to be validated beyond a semantic process to a syntactic process (Swain, 2001). Swain identified three possible functions of output: the noticing function, the hypothesis-testing function, and the metalinguistic function (Swain, 2001). The lesson on Day 3 gives opportunities for students to apply each of these functions. The noticing function happens when students look at the five visual choices, as mentioned by Seyfrid in the literature review section (2008), and cannot express with words what they see visually. The hypothesis-testing



function is applied when students brainstorm and share possible outcomes and predictions for the gutter space between panels, as mentioned by Strum (2013), in order to help them better express orally what the readers see visually. The metalinguistic function is the final output given by the students when they collaboratively create their own interpretations of the story, as they did so often in the study by Brown (2013).

### **Materials:**

- Copies of [Explorer: The Mystery Boxes](#), edited by Kazu Kibuishi (enough for pairs to share the book).
- [Interactive poster](#) of the weekly goal for students to focus and learn (see master copies for example/update)
- [Images and Pictures Detective](#) Worksheet (enough copies for each student)
- [Scripting Images and Pictures](#) Worksheet (enough copies for each student)
- Owly: Hanging up to Dry ([teacher's example](#) of Day 3 lesson)
- Owly: Hanging up to Dry ([blank comic](#) to use on Day 3 lesson)
- Owly: [Gone Swimmin' Comic](#) (enough copies for paired student)
- Owly: [Hatchin' Friends Comic](#) (enough copies for paired student)
- Owly: [Let's Go Fly a Kite Comic](#) (enough copies for paired student)
- Samples of [student created work](#) (use for teacher's reference)

### **Daily Lessons:**

#### Day 1:

Use the poster to introduce this week's objectives. Have students say the weekly

goal as, “I can determine the author’s purpose and identify the point of view by making inferences when looking at the choice of images in a graphic novel.” Explain that details in the pictures and images show different points of view, or what the authors want you to notice, but as a reader you make all of those inferences in your own mind to comprehend the story (Seyfried, 2008).

Teacher reads aloud “The Butter Thief.” This comic relies heavily on images, and uses little words to tell the plot. While reading really model how to not just name the objects you see in the images, but to use those as clues to “tell” your own story from them. Here are a few examples to teach about the author’s purpose and point of view and how the images help the readers make those inferences (Kibuishi, 2011). As a teacher use digression on which examples you want to point out, or others you notice yourself, based on your students’ comprehension level, your connection to the story, etc.

- P. 60, frames 1 & 2: frame 1 shows the grandma’s point of view of looking and reaching for the butter, frame 2 shows us what grandma looks like from the point of the butter spirit in the box. This human vs. spirit point of view is done throughout the comic. Very important to notice that image choice because it is done right from the beginning.
- P. 61, frames 3,4 & 5,6: This shows a change from day to night, yet the girl is still thinking about watching her grandma bury the box.
- P. 61, frames 5-8: The point of view is as if the buried box is watching the house, girl come outside, and start digging. The point of view changes when the girl looks down at the reviled box in the last frame.
- P. 63, frame 1 & 2: Again the human vs. spirit point of view is shown. Frame 1

what the girl sees looking down into the box, frame 2 what the spirit sees while cursing the girl.

- P. 64-65, all frames: The images help readers determine the real spirit, and the newly cursed girl spirit. Real spirit has red eyebrows, no pupils in yellow eyes, and a beard. The girl spirit has green eyebrows, can see her pupils, and a ponytail.
- P. 66, frame 3: The first time we see the protective spirit he is shown standing in front of the house. The author's purpose for this choice is to show us what he protects.
- P. 67, frame 7: The point of view of the kitchen has changed, the tiles are much larger than they were on p. 60, frame 3.

### Day 2:

Use the poster to review this week's objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, "I can determine the author's purpose and identify the point of view by making inferences when looking at the choice of images in a graphic novel."

Today students will read "The Butter Thief" to become a detective and look for clues in the images and pictures to understand the whole story. They will ask themselves the questions on the Images and Picture Detective Worksheet (see master copies) as they "read the images" in the comic (Brenner, 2015). As a whole group, look at pages 60-61 together. Ask the 6 questions that are on the worksheet, students and teacher share answers with the group. Then, assign each student 2, side-by-side, pages to become "expert detectives" on the choice of images. Pass out the Images and Picture Detective

Worksheet (see master copies) to each student. Allow the rest of the lesson time for students to write out the clues they notice from the images on their pages. This worksheet will be used as a reference for students to use when they read aloud “The Butter Thief” to the group on Day 4.

- Teaching Tip: Younger students may have a slower start on this individual assignment. Go through each question aloud with them, as they fill in their own answers, or check in with each student, one-on-one, to assist on his or her own pages as needed.
- Teaching Tip: The last question on the Images and Picture Detective Worksheet (see master copies); may be difficult for younger students to do alone. Provide more one-on-one teaching for this, only use this question for upper grade levels, or set aside an extra day where the whole group can find correct examples on each page.

### Day 3:

Use the poster to review this week’s objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, “I can determine the author’s purpose and identify the point of view by making inferences when looking at the choice of images in a graphic novel.”

Today students will script wordless comics (Cary, 2004). Scripting the images requires students to make inferences that will tell, in their own words, the author’s story. Use the “Owly: Hanging up to Dry” (blank comic, see master copies) to model for the students the three different readings pairs will do. Have one student model with you, as a fishbowl activity. First read, both you and student silent read the comic to yourselves.

Try to figure out what story is being told. Second read, read the comic with your partner, stopping at images and panels that you have questions about, or have different ideas about what is happening in the story. Make sure both you and your partner agree with the inferences you are making about frames you are unsure of. Third read, write out a script to tell the story. Each frame needs a sentence explaining the images (see “Owly: Hanging up to Dry,” teacher’s example for ideas).

After modeling the activity, pair students up to script one of the following wordless comics; “Owly: Gone Swimmin’”, “Owly: Hatchin’ Friends,” or “Owly: Let’s Go Fly a Kite” (see master copies). Pass out the Scripting Images and Pictures Worksheet (see master copies). As time permits, pairs can share their scripts with the teacher or whole group.

- Teacher Tip: To model the 3<sup>rd</sup> read, I read each frame sentence in order (see “Owly: Hanging up to Dry,” teacher’s example) as the student helper points to the frame that matched the new story development.
- Teacher Tip: Set a timer for each of the three different paired readings. 3 min to silent read, 5-7 min to discuss images and story without scripting, 10-15 min to work on writing the script on the worksheet.
- Differentiation Tip: The 3<sup>rd</sup> read of scripting can be done orally or written.

#### Day 4:

Use the poster to review this week’s objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, “I can determine the author’s purpose and identify the point of view by making inferences when looking at the choice of images in a graphic novel.”

Students re-read their two pages (from Day 2 lesson) from “The Butter Thief” aloud to the group. To practice noticing the choice of image, have students script the images first (like they did in Day 3 Lesson), then read the word bubbles after. This requires the students to infer the author’s point of view of what is happening in the story. Use guiding questions to assess students’ ability to correctly share new details about the choice of images that they noticed.

**Assessments:**

Day 2: (Formative) Students correctly find details in the images that help them make inferences about the story, author’s purpose, and point of view on their own. Use guiding questions to assess students’ ability to correctly share new details about the choice of images that they notice.

Day 3: (Summative) Students’ scripting worksheet correctly narrates a story for the wordless comic. It should be a narration, not an explanation of what images are in the frame.

Day 4: (Summative) Students re-read their two pages from “The Butter Thief” aloud to the group. Use guiding questions to assess students’ ability to correctly share new details about the choice of images that they notice.

**Master Copies Index:**

Please refer to the following pages that correspond to the Lesson 4 Materials section of

the Teacher's Manual for all the master copies teachers will need to prep for the weekly lessons.

# EXPLORER: <sup>The</sup> Mystery Boxes

Comprehension  
Skill:  
"I can..."

Comprehension  
Strategies:  
"By..."

Graphic  
Novel  
Element

Story:

Sequence  
Events

Understand  
Text  
Structure

Choice  
of  
Frame

Whatzit!

Cause  
and  
Effect

Making  
Inferences

Use of  
Gutters  
Types of  
Transitions

Under the  
Floorboards

Describe  
the plot  
and story  
structure

Understand  
the  
Text  
Structure

Choice  
of  
Word  
Bubbles

The  
Soldier's  
Daughter

Determine  
the author's  
purpose  
and  
Identify the  
Point of View

Making  
Inferences

Choice  
of  
Images

The  
Butter  
Thief





Name\_\_\_\_\_ Pages \_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_

## **Images and Pictures Detective Work**

When reading a comic you must become a detective and look for clues in the images and pictures to understand the whole story. Ask yourself these questions as you “read the images” in the comic. Find six details that help you make inferences about the story.

1. DON'T READ THE WORDS! What can you learn from just looking at the images?
2. What is the background or setting?
3. What clothing do the characters wear?
4. What objects are in the images?
5. How do the facial expression change on the faces of the characters?
6. What is the point of view in each frame? From whose eyes are we seeing the images?

Name\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_

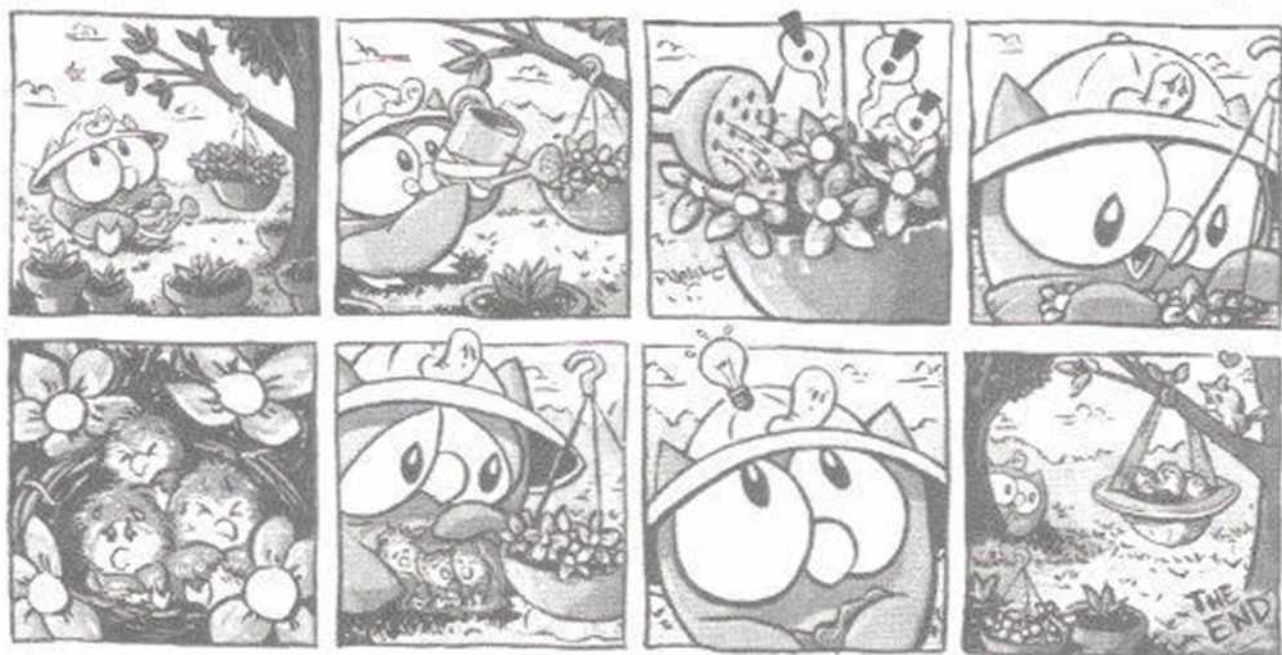
## Scripting Images and Pictures

When reading a comic with no words you must become a detective and look for clues in the images and pictures to understand the whole story. Write a script for each panel to tell the author's story.

| <b>Panel Order</b> | <b>What are the images telling you?</b> |
|--------------------|---|
| <b>Panel 1</b>     |   |
| <b>Panel 2</b>     |   |
| <b>Panel 3</b>     |   |
| <b>Panel 4</b>     |   |
| <b>Panel 5</b>     |   |
| <b>Panel 6</b>     |   |
| <b>Panel 7</b>     |   |
| <b>Panel 8</b>     |   |
| <b>Panel 9</b>     |   |
| <b>Panel 10</b>    |   |
| <b>Panel 11</b>    |   |
| <b>Panel 12</b>    |   |
| <b>Panel 13</b>    |   |
| <b>Panel 14</b>    |   |
| <b>Panel 15</b>    |   |
| <b>Panel 16</b>    |   |

**OWLY™** IN "HANGIN' UP TO DRY"

BY ANDY RUNTAN

©2006 ANDY RUNTAN • FOR MORE OWLY ADVENTURES, PLEASE VISIT: [WWW.TOPSELF.COMIX.COM](http://WWW.TOPSELF.COMIX.COM)2nd Read: Ask Questions

Frame 3: Q Why are the flowers saying something (!)?

A Its the baby birds getting sprayed by water

Frame 4: Q Why does the worm look nervous?

A

Frame 7: Q Does the owl or worm have the idea

A. Owly its his hat and he is worried about the birds in frame 6  
(frame 6)3rd Read: Scripting

Frame 1: Owly wants to water his plants

Frame 2: Waters the flower plant in the tree

Frame 3: Water pours out and noises come out of the flowers

Frame 4: Owly looks to see what is in the flowers

Frame 5: Its 3 baby birds in a nest

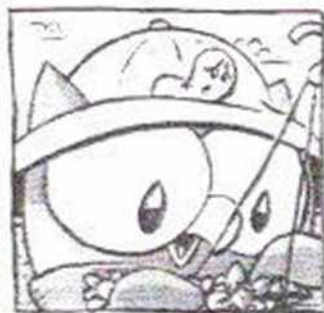
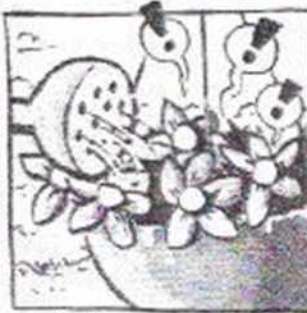
Frame 6: Owly takes them out to dry and feels bad for them

Frame 7: Owly + worm get an idea

Frame 8: Owly uses his hat to hang on the tree for the new nest.

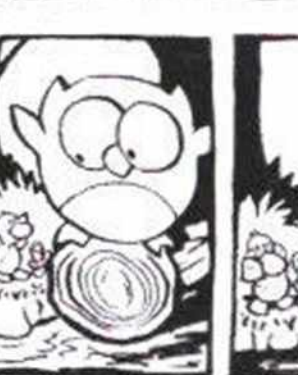
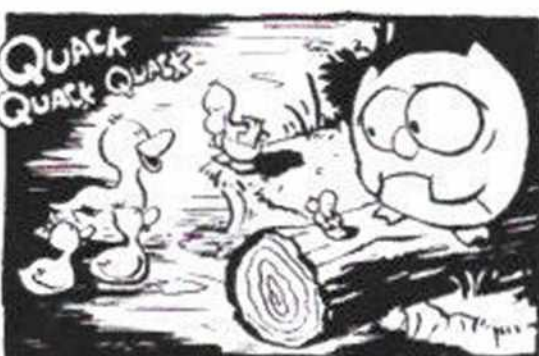
# OWLY™ IN "HANGIN' UP TO DRY"

BY ANDY RUNTON



©2006 ANDY RUNTON • FOR MORE OWLY ADVENTURES, PLEASE VISIT - [WWW.TOPSHELF.COM/OWLY](http://WWW.TOPSHELF.COM/OWLY)

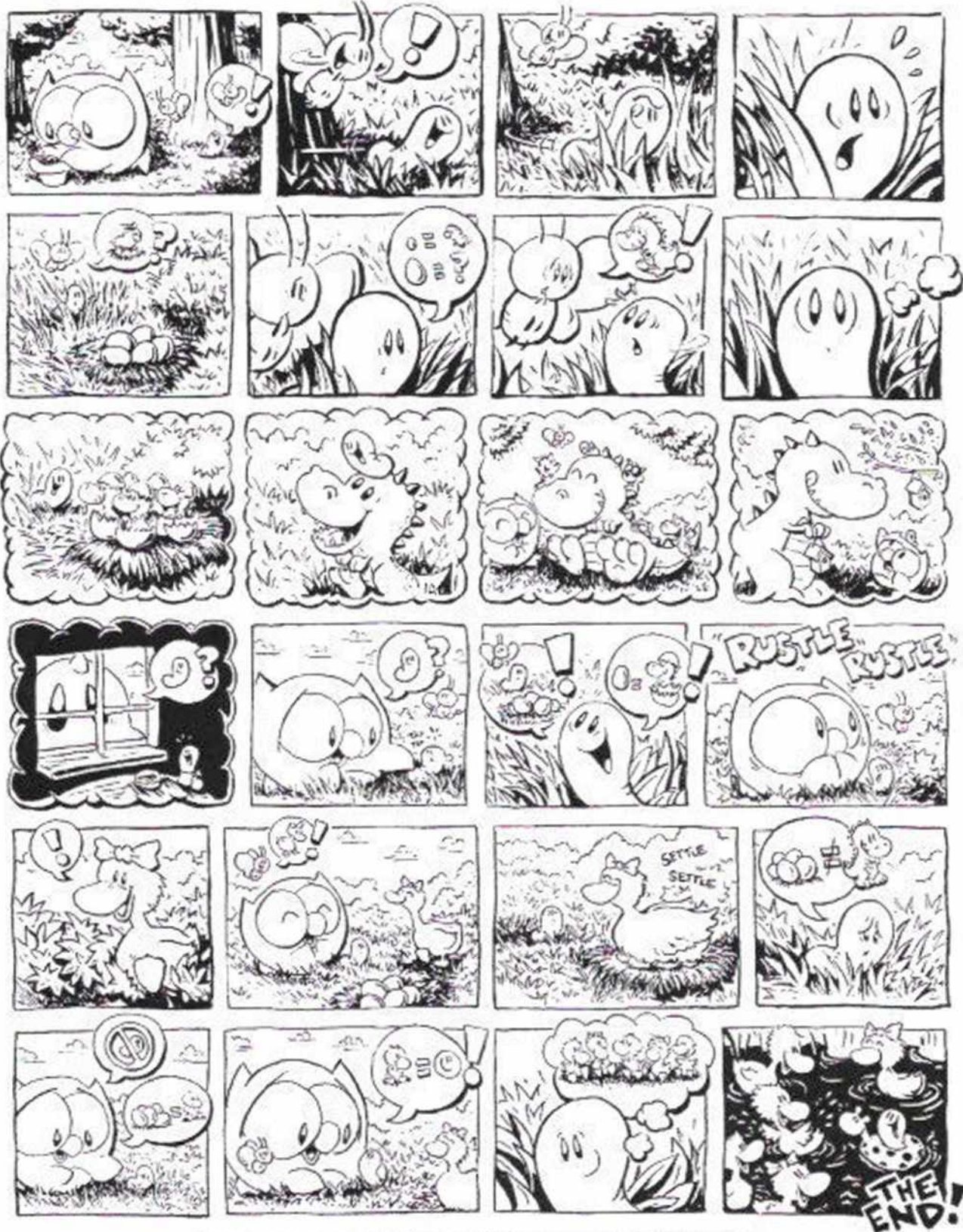






# OWLY™ & WORMY IN "HATCHIN' FRIENDS"

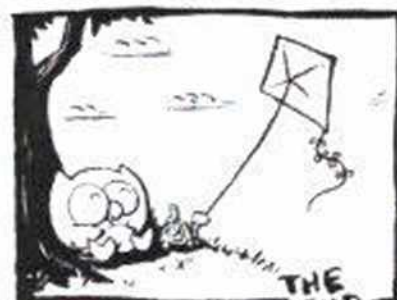
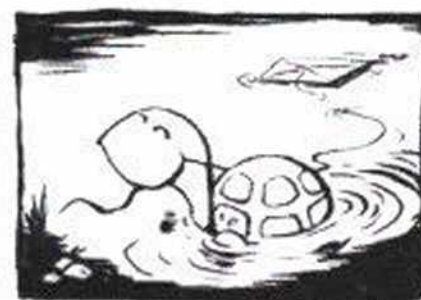
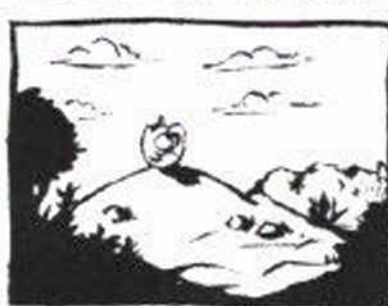
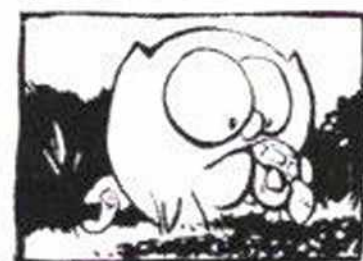
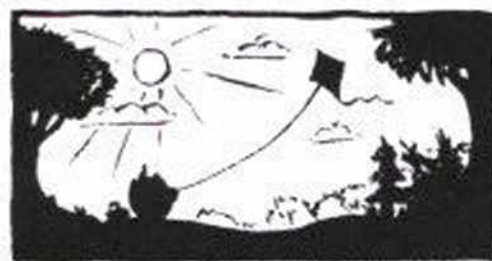
BY ANDY RUNTON





# OWLY AND WORMY in "LET'S GO FLY A KITE..."

BY ANDY RUNTON



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date

4-5-17

## Images and Pictures Detective Work

When reading a comic you must become a detective and look for clues in the images and pictures to understand the whole story. Ask yourself these questions as you "read the images" in the comic. Find six details that help you make inferences about the story.

- 64  
frame 5
1. DON'T READ THE WORDS! What can you learn from just looking at the images?

girl. she woke up

- 64  
frame 1
2. What is the background or setting?

the boy, outside, the boy

- 64  
frame 6
3. What clothing do the characters wear?

fur, boy, pink, girl, greenish yellow.

- 64  
frame 4
4. What objects are in the images?

butter, rock

- 64  
frame 2
5. How do the facial expression change ~~on the change~~ <sup>face</sup> of the characters?

boy. sad

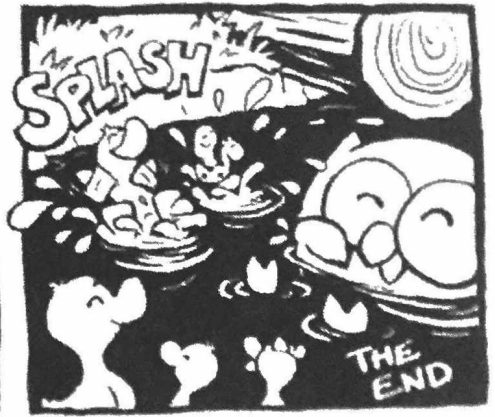
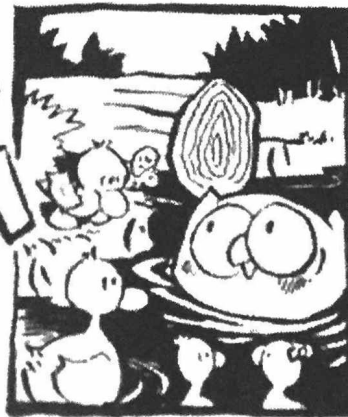
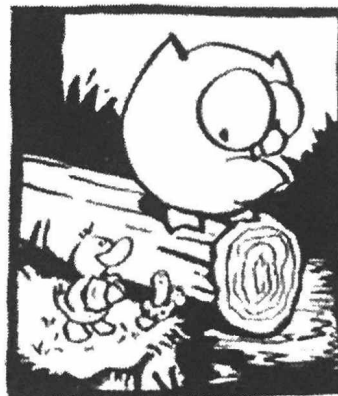
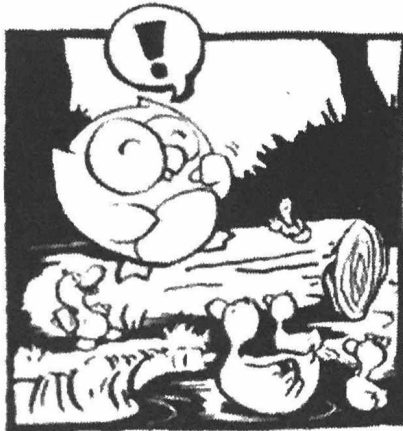
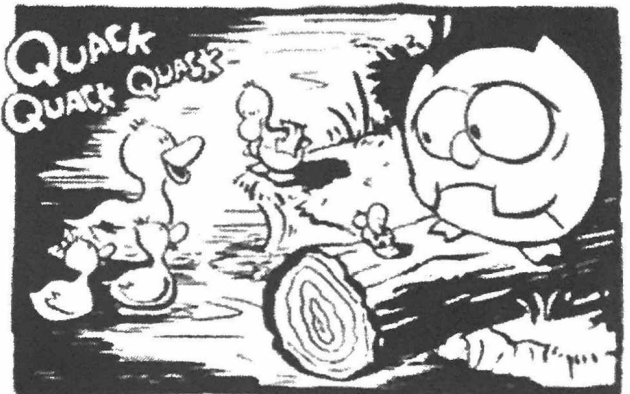
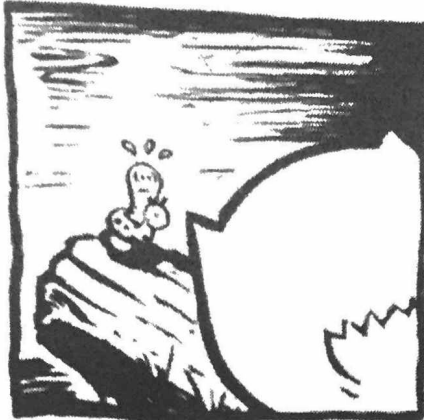
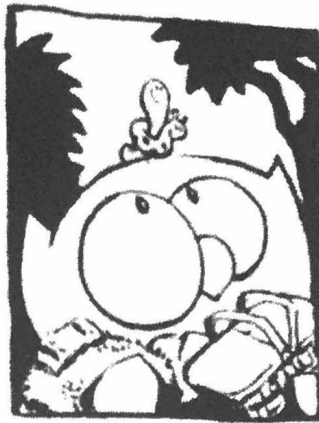
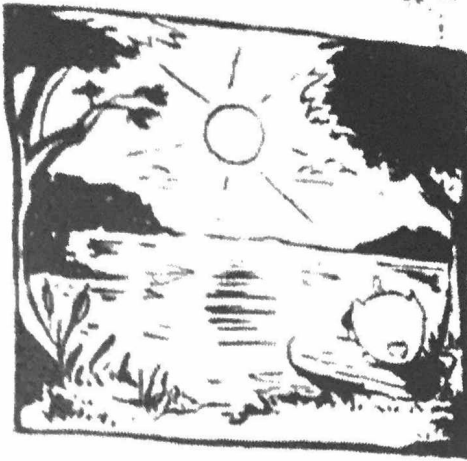
- 64  
frame 3
6. What is the point of view in each frame? From whose eyes are we seeing the images?

girl sees the boy



# OWLY AND WORMY IN GONE SWIMMIN'

ANDY RUNTON



Name

Date

4/5/17

## Scripting Images and Pictures

When reading a comic with no words you must become a detective and look for clues in the images and pictures to understand the whole story. Write a script for each panel to tell the author's story.

| Panel Order | What are the images telling you?             |
|-------------|--|
| Panel 1     | On a hot sunny day and wormy go swimming     |
| Panel 2     | owly and wormy are excited                   |
| Panel 3     | owly and wormy get ready to go in the water. |
| Panel 4     | Wormy is ready to go in the pond.            |
| Panel 5     | Wormy gets scared                            |
| Panel 6     | wormy hears a quack sound                    |
| Panel 7     | the ducks want to jump in the pond.          |
| Panel 8     | owly is laughing                             |
| Panel 9     | he tries to teach them                       |
| Panel 10    | owly is getting ready to jump in the pond    |
| Panel 11    | owly loses balance                           |
| Panel 12    | owly falls in the water                      |
| Panel 13    | the ducks and wormy look at him              |
| Panel 14    | they all laugh at him                        |
| Panel 15    | owly laughs to                               |
| Panel 16    | the end                                      |

## Lesson 5: Spring Cleaning

### Objective:

*Make predictions (comprehension skill):* Students will closely read a graphic novel or comic strip to cite specific image details as evidence to make logical predictions from it, and make conclusions drawn from those images.

*Ask questions (comprehension strategies):* Students will analyze how, when, where, what, who and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of the images and pictures in a graphic novel.

*Choice of movement (graphic novel element):* Students analyze the structure of movement lines, as well as movement of character and things, in a graphic novel and comic strip to see how the images relate to, and help explain, the whole story.

### Common Core State Standards:

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1

Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.3

Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact

over the course of a text.

### **Background Information:**

This background information is for you, the teacher, to quickly get familiar with the basic theory behind the “choice of movement” in a graphic novel.

Each frame in a comic must logically link to the next so that ultimately all frames add up to a meaningful whole. This is what is known as cohesion and coherence. The cohesion is seen by the movement changes in comics (McCloud, 1993). The choice of movement can be shown in two commonly used ways (Seyfried, 2008).

First, the change in the movement of character’s facial expressions, body language or objects from one frame to the next will show a logical link (see Day 1 for examples). Second, are the uses of movement lines within the frame’s art. All the wavy lines seen in comics represent a symbol or visual metaphor for emotions or our five senses (refer back to Lesson 2 and 4 background notes) (McCloud, 1993). For example wavy lines around a face may symbolize dizziness, yet zig-zag lines around the same face may symbolize anger. The ways the eyes and eyebrow lines are drawn in different frames also help express those same emotions. The placements of the character's hands are also examples of movement that show emotions. Wavy lines can also apply to the readers’ senses other than visual (McCloud, 1993). Wavy lines above a loaf of bread, expresses smell and taste. Those same wavy lines behind a person running can expresses movement of the air, or coming out of an instrument to expresses sound. Finally, those wavy lines above a mystery box, express the imagination of touch. In more advance level graphic novels, the choice of moment lines may be used as the background to

symbolize a prevailing theme or emotion in the plot (McCloud, 1993).

### **Materials:**

- Copies of [Explorer: The Mystery Boxes](#), edited by Kazu Kibuishi (enough for pairs to share the book).
- [Interactive poster](#) of the weekly goal for students to focus and learn (see master copies for example/update)
- “Spring Cleaning” [Missing Panel: Pages 24-39](#) (side-by side copy of two pages, one for each student)
- [Choice of Movement](#) Worksheet (one copy for each student)
- Choice of Movement Worksheet: [Teacher Example](#) (for teacher’s notes and ideas)
- Samples of [student created work](#) (use for teacher’s reference)

### **Daily Lessons:**

#### Day 1:

Use the poster to introduce this week’s objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, “I can make predictions by asking questions when looking at the choice of movement in a graphic novel.”

Pass out a “Spring Cleaning” Missing Panel side by side page copy of to each student (see master copies). Explain that today they will make a prediction on what is happening underneath the “hidden” panel to express the movement of the story and characters (Cary, 2004). Guide student to look carefully at the previous and next panels images and words (review of lesson 3 and 4) for clues on what had to happen in the

hidden frame to make the next frame make sense to the reader. Students may write their predictions on the blank frame. Allow about 5 min for students to silently read their section of the comic, and make a prediction. Then, starting with the first 2 pages, have each student come up to read aloud their page to the class, and share their prediction of the hidden frame. Once the prediction is made the teacher reveals the real page in the book to compare if the prediction was correct or not. Also explain why it was a valid prediction or not, based on what the previous and next frames showed.

While students read aloud make sure to use the following examples from the first 4 pages to teach about the choice of movement in a graphic novel (Kibuishi, 2011). As a teacher use digression on which examples you want to point out, or others you notice yourself, based on your students' comprehension level, your connection to the story, etc.

- P. 24-25, frame 8: The previous frame shows the boy starting to throw toys out of his closet, the next frame shows the boy sitting by his closet and looking confused at a box. This means that the hidden frame should be about the boy finding the box in his closet.
- P. 26-27, frame 8: The previous frame shows the boy asking a question to the man at the door, the next frame shows the man answering a question but not the question the reader saw. This means that the hidden frame shows the man answering the original question and the boy asking another question.
- Teacher tip: have this first read be a pre-assessment on how much or little students are reading the movement clues aloud, or even notice. Some may not even notice, some notice but won't share aloud unless asked, some naturally describe the movement in the panel before even reading the word bubbles.

### Day 2:

Use the poster to review this week's objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, "I can make predictions by asking questions when looking at the choice of movement in a graphic novel."

This day is an extra day for the day 1 activity. Thirty minutes was not long enough for each student to read aloud their pages, make a prediction, and have the teacher discuss with the group what made the prediction valid, or what questions should have been asked about the previous and next frames to make the prediction more accurate. Use today to finish the activity from day 1.

Today students create their own note page to use for tomorrow's lesson. Pass out Choice of Movement Worksheet (see master copies) to each student. They lay the blank page across their assigned side-by side pages from lesson 1 to roughly trace the choice of frames that were used on those pages, and number each frame (review from lesson 1). See the Choice of Movement Worksheet: Teacher Example (master copies) for an example of the correct set up.

### Day 3:

Use the poster to review this week's objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, "I can make predictions by asking questions when looking at the choice of movement in a graphic novel."

As a whole group look at pages 24-25 in "Spring Cleaning." Model for the students how to look at each frame to notice the movement that is happening inside.

Focus on movement lines, facial expression, and body actions, or changes of objects in the images (Seyfried, 2008). Make this a whole group discussion, while the teacher records the predictions of movement the students notice. See Choice of Movement Worksheet: Teacher Example for possible ideas (master copies).

Once students know what to do with their Choice of Movement Worksheet have them silent read their side-by-side pages and record their own notes of movement choice. The teacher checks in with individual students to make sure prediction of the movement lines, etc. are correct. Use the following examples to teach about the choice of movement for each side-by-side pages. As a teacher use digression on which examples you want to point out, or others you notice yourself, based on your students' comprehension level, your connection to the story, etc.

- P. 26/27: The camera flash, the computer mouse moving, the girl's speed and dust lines.
- P. 28/29: The wizard walking through a closed door, the older brother breaking up the fighting wizards, the wand zapping the girl into a frog.
- P. 30/31: The frog hopping lines, the puzzle box using magical powers, the kids looking through the window blinds.
- P. 32/33: The girl swiveling onto the computer chair, the wizards battle lines, the kids bouncing up the stairs lines.
- P. 34/35: The boy sitting up tall for an idea lines, the bus driving fast lines, the kids walking up to a house.
- P.36/37: The kids turning heads to the crash lines, magical lines of objects, lines that show the puzzle box coming apart.



- P. 38/39: The boxes vanishing lines, the girl wizard running fast past people, the wizard fighting dust lines

#### Day 4:

Use the poster to review this week's objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, "I can make predictions by asking questions when looking at the choice of movement in a graphic novel."

Students re-read their two pages (from Day 3 lesson) from "Spring Cleaning" aloud to the group. To practice noticing the choice of movement, have students script the movement first, then read the word bubbles after. This requires the students to predict what is happening in each frame. Use guiding questions to assess students' ability to correctly share new details about the choice of movement that they notice.

#### **Assessments:**

Day 1 & 2: (Summative) Determine how much or little students are reading the movement clues aloud, or even notice. Some may not even notice, some notice but won't share aloud unless asked, some naturally describe the movement in the panel before even reading the word bubbles.

Day 3: (Summative) Students record their own notes of movement choice in a graphic novel. This includes movement lines, facial expression, and body actions, or changes of objects in the images.

Day 4: (Formative) Students re-read their two pages at a time from “Spring Cleaning” aloud to the group. Use guiding questions to assess students’ ability to correctly share new details about the choice of movement that they notice.

**Master Copies Index:**

Please refer to the following pages that correspond to the Lesson 5 Materials section of the Teacher’s Manual for all the master copies teachers will need to prep for the weekly lessons.

# EXPLORER: <sup>The</sup> Mystery Boxes

Comprehension Skill:  
"I can..."

Comprehension Strategies:  
"By..."

Graphic Novel Element

Story:

Sequence Events

Understand Text Structure

Choice of Frame

Whatzit!

Cause and Effect

Making Inferences

Use of Gutters  
Types of Transitions

Under the Floorboards

Describe the plot and story structure

Understand the Text Structure

Choice of Word Bubbles

The Soldier's Daughter

Determine the author's purpose and Identify the Point of View

Making Inferences

Choice of Images

The Butter Thief

Make Predictions

Asking Questions

Choice of Movement

Spring Cleaning









Y'KNOW, BRO, YOU  
COULD SELL SOME OF  
THIS STUFF ON eBUY!



I BET YOU COULD MAKE ENOUGH  
MONEY TO AFFORD SOME NEW VIDEO  
GAMES! LIKE SKULLTHUMPER II.

YOU'RE THE ONE  
WHO WANTS  
THAT GAME...



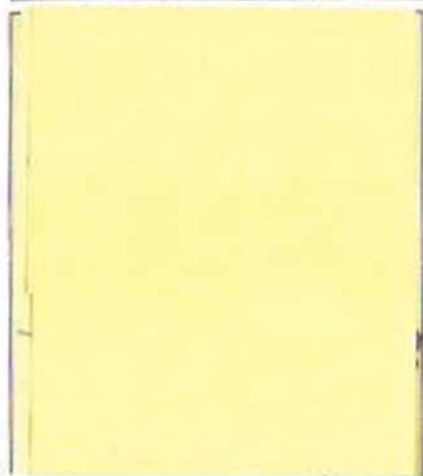
CLEAN OUT YOUR  
OWN CLOSET.





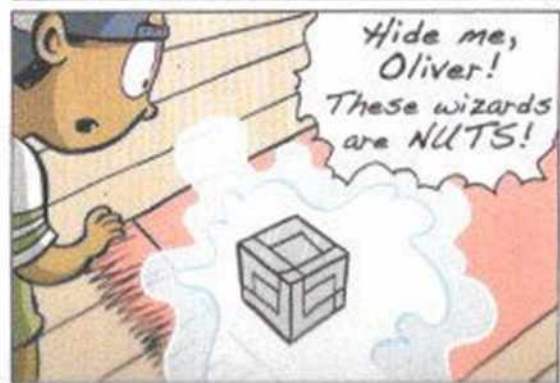


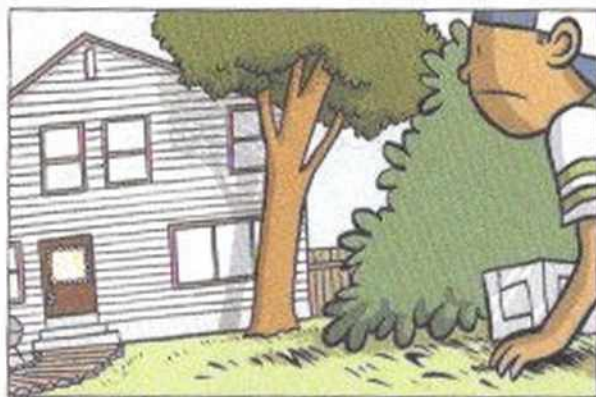












WHATCHA GOT THERE?







A BOX ONLY WORKS WITH ITS PARTNER. SUPPOSEDLY, THESE MATCHING SETS WERE ALL SCATTERED AND LOST DURING SOME WIZARD WAR BACK IN THE DAY.



POOR THING. ALL THESE YEARS, TRAPPED IN OUR WORLD.



THAT MUST BE WHY HE CHOSE YOUR MESSY CLOSET. PROBABLY THOUGHT YOU'D NEVER NOTICE WITH ALL YOUR OTHER JUNK.

IT'S A GIRL.



HOW CAN YOU TELL?



I HEARD HER VOICE IN MY HEAD.





121

SHE'S TIRED OF CRAZY  
WIZARD SHENANIGANS.  
YOU THINK SHE  
CAN HIDE OUT HERE?



MY HOUSE IS TOO CLOSE TO  
YOURS. THEY'LL CHECK  
HERE EVENTUALLY.



AND AS MUCH  
AS I LOVE  
MAGIC, MY  
PARENTS  
WOULD  
KILL ME.

WHAT IF WE DIG A REALLY DEEP HOLE  
SOMEWHERE...OR HIDE HER AT THE  
BOTTOM OF THE OCEAN?



"LIVING MAGIC" MEANS IT'S **ALIVE**—  
SHE COULD SUFFOCATE OR DROWN.  
PLUS, I READ THESE BOXES GET  
LONELY BEING ONLY HALF A PAIR.  
THEY LIKE TO BE AROUND OTHER  
**STUFF.**

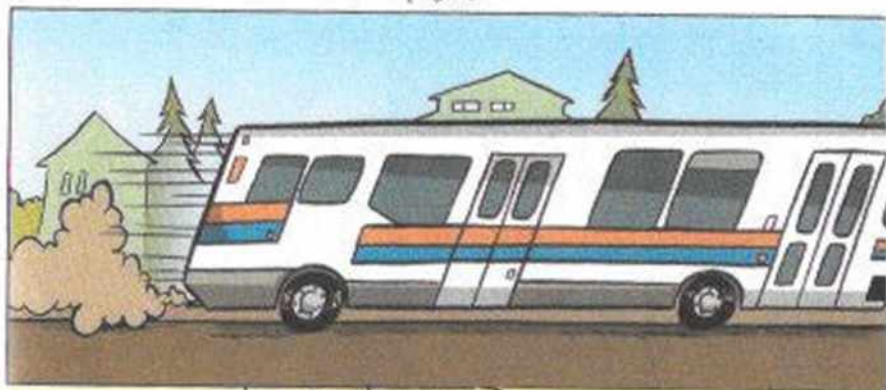


WHAT ABOUT A MUSEUM?  
OR AN ANTIQUES STORE?



I  
KNOW!







WE'RE GONNA GO DOWNSTAIRS  
AND PLAY SOME SKEE-BALL.

WHO'S YOUR  
FRIEND? SHE'S  
PRETTY.

MAKE SURE SHE DOESN'T  
TRIP OVER MY PORCELAIN  
PORPOISES!



WHERE SHOULD  
WE HIDE YOU?

**CRASH!**

IT'S NO USE TRYING  
TO HIDE THE BOX!  
I HAPPEN TO BE A  
DETECTIVE AS WELL  
AS A WIZARD!



LOOK OVER  
THERE!



THIS VASE..



IT'S  
ANOTHER  
BOX!

POP!



!!!





♥ I'd lost  
of ever finding  
you again!



Thank you,  
Oliver and Valerie!  
Thank you both!



WHAT JUST HAPPENED?



THEY COMBINED  
POWERS TO MOVE TO  
ANOTHER DIMENSION  
WHERE THEY CAN  
HIDE TOGETHER?

JUST A  
THEORY.

THUMP



CHILDREN, DO YOU KNOW  
THESE CHARACTERS?



NOT INTENTIONALLY.



MADAM! I AM WILLING TO OFFER YOU  
\$5,000 FOR THIS ENTIRE LOT OF GOODS!



YOU'RE TOO  
LATE. THE BOX  
IS LONG GONE.



\$10,000! WHAT DO YOU SAY? YOU COULD BUY TWICE  
AS MUCH JUNK...ER, BEAUTIFUL ANTIQUES, WITH THAT!



ARE YOU KIDDING?  
THIS PAINTING ALONE  
IS WORTH \$10,000!



MINE!

I SAW  
IT FIRST!



THE END!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## **Choice of Movement**

Page \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



Name Teacher Example/Group

9.24/25

# Choice of Movement

1 Not all frames show definite movement

2 Boy stretching out arms to complain more  
 Dad's hands on hip show frustrations

3 "lines around hands to show dad giving cleaner and boy reaching out for it

4 Older bro pops head + shoulder outside boy's door →  
 Boy's toys... more of them outside of the closet

5 Older bro gets idea... he rubs his cheek with his finger

~~scribble~~

6 Box has "lines around it, showing special powers or vibrations

Boy raises eyebrows to look curious

7 Older bro hands on hip, show who is boss  
 Boy frowning while cleaning, show he's not happy

8 Boy throws more toys out of his closet →

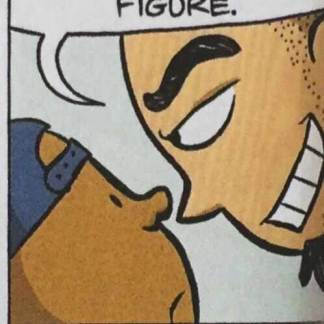
9 Boy shakes the box " and looks confused because of his crooked eyebrows



MADAM! THERE IS NO NEED TO BE RUDE.  
I HAVE AS MUCH RIGHT TO DO  
BUSINESS HERE AS ANY WIZARD!



NOW, SIR.  
I'M SURE WE CAN  
COME TO AN  
**AGREEABLE**  
**ARRANGEMENT**  
IF YOU'LL GIVE ME  
A BALLPARK  
FIGURE.



The guy will say  
I've got one hundred  
dollars or He will  
say so do we have  
a deal? (Wrong)

Reacts  
about well  
~ explain movement  
in all frames  
on reading words

I'VE GOT TWO HUNDRED...  
DO I HEAR THREE?







MY GOOD LAD, I'M PREPARED TO OFFER YOU ANY WISH YOUR HEART MIGHT DESIRE! PERHAPS A PET UNICORN?



DOES HE LOOK LIKE THE TYPE OF KID WHO WANTS A UNICORN?

I CAN MAKE YOU TALLER. YOU BOYS LOVE



THAT'S ENOUGH.



1 The line  
Show me she  
moving her arms  
forward

2 The door  
Slamed.

7 The lines mean going  
fast.



3 The  
brother  
is moving  
his head  
and chewing  
his food

4 No  
movement  
lines

8 Means floating or  
Magic.

9 Means  
Magic

5 The crumbs  
are falling  
from the brother's  
mouth.

6 The lines mean  
that the brother is  
moving his hands sideways

10 The wand  
changing the  
girl.

11 No  
movement  
line



WE'RE GONNA GO DOWNSTAIRS  
AND PLAY SOME SKEE-BALL.

WHO'S YOUR  
FRIEND? SHE'S  
PRETTY.

MAKE SURE SHE DOESN'T  
TRIP OVER MY PORCELAIN  
PORPOISES!

WHEN YOU SAID YOUR  
AUNT WAS A PACK  
RAT, YOU WERE  
**NOT** KIDDING.

WHERE SHOULD  
WE HIDE YOU?

**CRASH!**



IT'S NO USE TRYING  
TO HIDE THE BOX!  
I HAPPEN TO BE A  
**DETECTIVE** AS WELL  
AS A WIZARD!



LOOK OVER  
THERE!

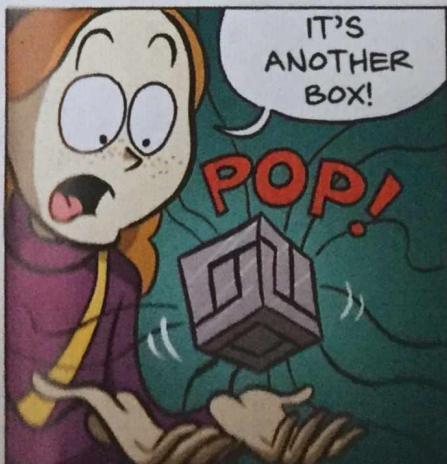


They walk over  
to the vase  
(★ Prediction)  
did well explaining pics  
- F2 (bubble word connection)  
- F5 (told story not just  
say "crash")

THIS VASE.



IT'S  
ANOTHER  
BOX!



!!!



## Choice of Movement

1 the girl blushes

2 the girl looks around

3 the girl's eyes are big because she is surprised

4 the boy looks at the box

5 lines to show something fell

6 there are waves around the box

7 there are lines around the box and a vase

8 the vase starts shaking

9 they hold up the vase and box

10 the vase turns into a nother box

11 they both break

## Lesson 6: The Keeper's Treasure

### Objective:

*Describe Figurative Language (comprehension skill):* Students interpret words and phrases as they are used in a graphic novel, determine connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how those specific word choices shape the meaning.

*Visualize (comprehension strategies):* Students analyze the structure of words and images and how they relate to each other and the whole, in order to learn new vocabulary terms.

*Choice of Words (graphic novel element):* Students interpret the use of limited words in a graphic novel, and analyze how those specific word choices shape the meaning of the story.

### Common Core State Standards:

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.4

Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.5

Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene,

or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

### **Background Information:**

This background information is for you, the teacher, to quickly get familiar with the basic theory behind the “choice of vocabulary words” in a graphic novel. This lesson is created to assist students who are English Language Learners. Multiple types of learners, from ELL to struggling readers, have shown increased improvement in reading because of the elements used to create a graphic novel (Brenner, 2015). These elements require students to use decoding and comprehension skills with new words that rely on visuals for the meaning (Cary, 2004). ELL students who struggle with English they can learn vocabulary through visuals, and the use of the following second language teaching methodologies.

James Asher, the creator of Total Physical Response, which is a language teaching method, states “the interaction between listening and body motion can enhance the comprehension and internalization of language input and facilitate long term retention” (as cited in Hwang, 2014, p. 434). The interactions between visual, auditory, and motor functions while learning new language skills is needed to fully express a new learner's understanding when they may not have the confidence or ability to express understanding orally. TPR brings Gardner's kinesthetic intelligence to the forefront of language acquisition in a meaningful context (Hwang, 2014). TPR is used in this lesson because of the strong connections adjectives have to visuals, and verbs have to motor functions. TPR also increases learners' interaction with, and attention to, the language and literacy lessons.

The Direct Method theorizes that language is learned through the direct association of words and phrases through objects and actions without the use of the native language as an intervention. Lessons are usually developed around a here and now theme with specially chosen pictures to express that theme, and much of class time is spent responding to the teacher's questions. Complete and meaningful sentences are used, but grammar rules are not explicitly taught (O'Maggio Hadley, 2001). In this week's lesson, I am only relying on one language, English, without connecting the new vocabulary to other background languages. It focuses around pictures from printouts, and the story "The Keeper's Treasure." The students' response comes from my prompts, or their peers, but requires them to make a direct association through objects and actions.

Comprehensible Output Hypothesis is Swain's theory that language learners need to deliver a comprehensible message in order for the learning to be validated beyond a semantic process to a syntactic process. Swain identified three possible functions of output: the noticing function, the hypothesis-testing function, and the metalinguistic function (Swain, 2001). This lesson gives opportunities for students to apply each of these functions. The noticing function happens when students look at the five visual choices, as mentioned by Seyfrid in the literature review section (2008), and cannot express with words what they see visually. The hypothesis-testing function is applied when students brainstorm and share possible outcomes and predictions for the gutter space between panels, as mentioned by Strum (2013), in order to help them better express orally what the readers see visually. The metalinguistic function is the final output given by the students when they collaboratively create their own interpretations of the story, as they did so often in the study by Brown (2013).

**Materials:**

- Copies of Explorer: The Mystery Boxes, edited by Kazu Kibuishi (enough for pairs to share the book).
- [Interactive poster](#) of the weekly goal for students to focus and learn (see master copies for example/update)
- Picture [flash cards of the target basic nouns](#), and ones that use descriptive adjectives for the same noun.
- [Flash cards with target verbs](#) and adverbs written on them.
- Collection of “props” for student to use while creating a mini-skits (these can be student made, or creative use of what is supplied in the room already).

**Daily Lessons:**Day 1:

Use the poster to introduce this week’s objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, “I can describe figurative language by visualizing when looking at the choice of vocabulary words used in a graphic novel.”

Explain to students that when reading a story you imagine the characters acting out that story in your head. So readers need to imagine what that action is when they read. Ask students if they remember what we call words that we can act out (this is a review from past verb lessons). Explain to them that you are going to call out a verb or verb phrase everyone will act out as a first guess, even if they don’t know for sure yet. Remind the students that everyone acts things out differently, so there is no right or



wrong way. The verb/adverb (or phrase) list is as follows:

|           |                               |                |              |
|-----------|-------------------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Reach     | Hustle                        | Lost           | Stand back   |
| Wonders   | Hot to the touch              | Hatch          | Grant a wish |
| Imagining | Live up to my<br>expectations | Heart's desire | Perhaps      |

Next, explain to the students that good readers also notice details in the words or pictures to help them understand the story better. Explain that you have some photos of objects that will also be in the story we will read. Display all 20 photos to the group and give them a few min. to look them over. Call out a noun or noun with an adjective. Ask students to point to the one that matched the best, explain there could be more than one correct picture. The noun/adjective list is as follows:

|                         |                   |                           |
|-------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Revolting, endless, bog | Glacial wasteland | Endless, empty, labyrinth |
| Treasure chest          | Ancient artifacts | Long-lost remnants        |
| Dragon egg              | Ferocious beast   | All-powerful genie        |
| Great                   | An exit           |                           |

Again, this activity is to be used to activate background knowledge, and as an informal pre-assessment. If time allows, read through the story “The Keeper’s Treasure” as a read aloud. Students follow along.

## Day 2:

Use the poster to review this week's objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, "I can describe figurative language by visualizing when looking at the choice of vocabulary words used in a graphic novel."

Today's lesson is read "The Keeper's Treasure" as a group. The teacher begins by reading the first few pages, guiding the students to read the speech bubbles as well as the pictures. Do this by "thinking aloud" what you notice happening in each frame, and how the pictures are giving just as many clues to what is happening as the words. Also read what each character says in different voices. This is to show students what you expect when it's their turn to read the graphic novel aloud.

Today's focus is on the verbs/adverbs and nouns/adjectives from the story, which are the same ones from the flash cards yesterday. Stop reading when you get to one of those phrases and discuss how they are expressed in the graphics. Make the connection that often, if you don't know what a word means, you can get its meaning from the action clues, or visual details in the frames. Ask students to act out the verbs in the same way it is shown in the story. Talk about how particular adjectives help describe the picture better than just a basic noun used alone. Read the entire graphic story in this manner, having students take turns reading a page the way you did at the beginning.

➤ Teacher Tip: This day's reading can be split into 2 separate readings if time allows.

One reading for just the verbs/adverbs discussion. The second read just for the nouns/adjectives discussion.

## Day 3:

Use the poster to review this week's objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, "I can describe figurative language by visualizing when looking at the choice of vocabulary words used in a graphic novel."

Play the flash card games from day one with the students again as a way to assess new learning. For the verb flash cards, show or whisper one verb to a student to act out, the other students point to the verb flash card that was being expressed. Take turns in this manner until all verbs have been reviewed. Then have students take turns choosing one verb card. That one student comes up with a sentence using that verb. Everyone else acts out the sentence in his or her own way.

For the noun flash cards review the images by saying the phrase that describes the one you are looking at. Students will point to the correct one. Then, students will describe in their own phrase a picture for the rest of the group to "spy." End the lesson by explaining and assigning the next day activity to pairs.

#### Day 4:

Use the poster to review this week's objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, "I can describe figurative language by visualizing when looking at the choice of vocabulary words used in a graphic novel."

Each pair will "act out" part of the graphic story for the rest of the group. Each group will pick 2-4 of the learned verbs and 2-4 of the learned descriptive nouns; so that no groups will have the same vocabulary terms. The pairs will act out the character and story based around the verbs and descriptive nouns they received. The pairs must actively use the verbs in their skit and incorporate objects that represent the nouns.

Allow students to read from the text as their dialogue if they do not want to make up their own. Give 15 min. for pairs to plan and practice their skits. The last 15 min. will be to share and present to the small group.

**Assessments:**

Day 1: (Pre-assessment) This is meant to be an informal pre-assessment to see how much clearer each verb, adverb, or figurative noun needs to be explained or practiced this week.

Day 3: (Formative) Students play the flash card games again from day one with to assess new learning of the figurative language and vocabulary.

Day 4: (Summative) Pairs actively, and correctly, use their assigned verbs, and incorporate objects that represent the assigned nouns in their skit.

**Master Copies Index:**

Please refer to the following pages that correspond to the Lesson 6 Materials section of the Teacher's Manual for all the master copies teachers will need to prep for the weekly lessons.

# EXPLORER: <sup>The</sup> Mystery Boxes

| Comprehension Skill:<br>"I can..."                            | Comprehension Strategies:<br>"By..." | Graphic Novel Element                  | Story:                 |
|---|--------------------------------------|--|------------------------|
| Sequence Events   | Understand Text Structure            | Choice of Frame                        | Whatzit!               |
| Cause and Effect  | Making Inferences                    | Use of Gutters<br>Types of Transitions | Under the Floorboards  |
| Describe the plot and story structure                         | Understand the Text Structure        | Choice of Word Bubbles                 | The Soldier's Daughter |
| Determine the author's purpose and Identify the Point of View | Making Inferences                    | Choice of Images                       | The Butter Thief       |
| Make Predictions  | Asking Questions                     | Choice of Movement                     | Spring Cleaning        |
| Describe Figurative Language                                  | Visualizing                          | Choice of Vocab. Words                 | The Keeper's Treasure  |



Bog



Endless  
Bog



Revoltling  
Bog





Long-lost  
Remnants



Ancient  
Artifacts





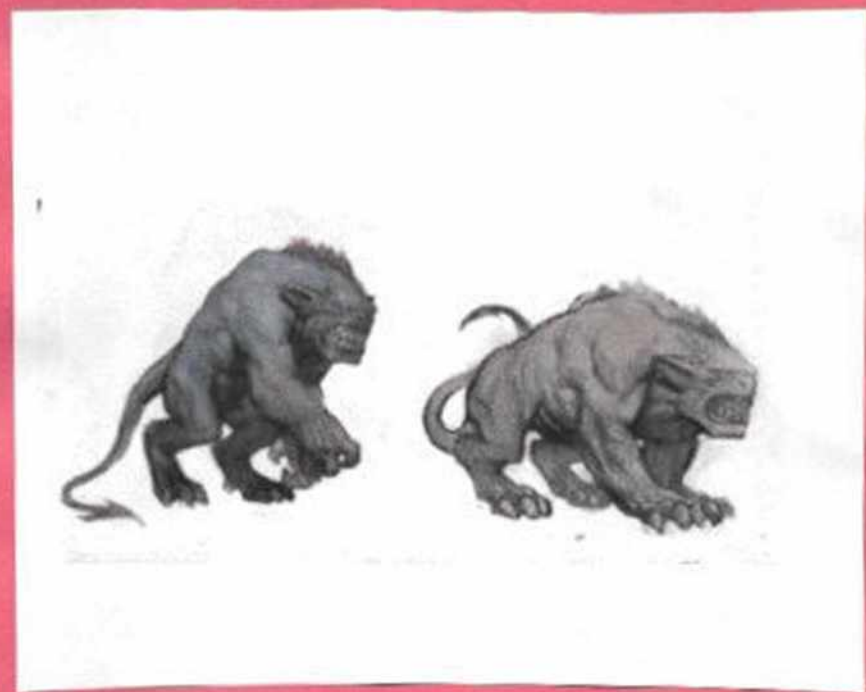
Chest



Treasure  
Chest



Beast



Ferocious  
Beast



Genie



All-powerful  
Genie

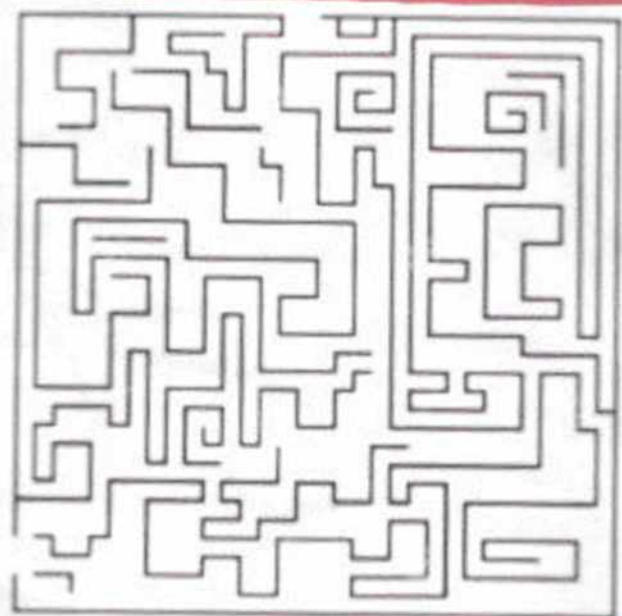


Eggs

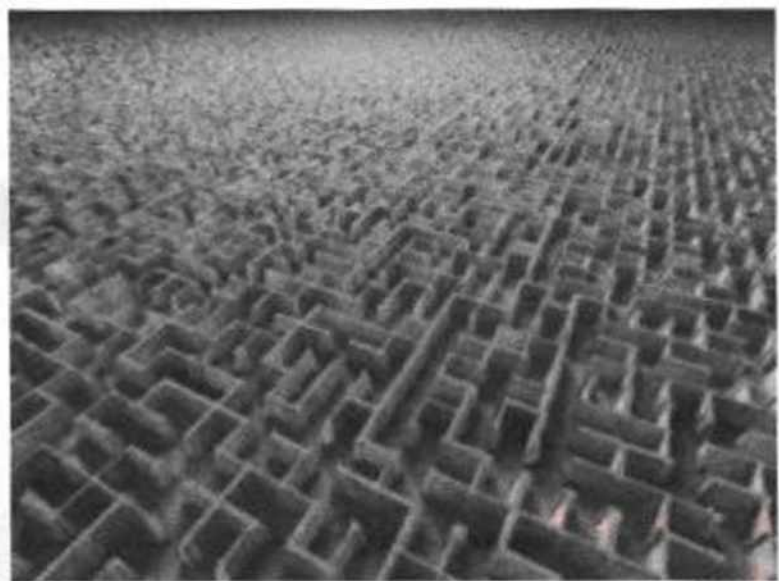


Dragon  
Eggs





Labyrinth



Endless  
Empty  
Labyrinth



Wasteland



Glacial  
Wasteland



Great



An  
Exit



hatch

reach

lost

heart's  
desire

perhaps

live up  
to my  
expectations

wonders

hustle

hot to  
the  
touch

grant  
a  
wish

stand  
back

imagining

## Lesson 7: The Escape Option

### Objective:

*Summarize (comprehension skill):* Students will independently continue the ending of a story by creating the next part to an open, unfinished, ending in the story, but keep the central ideas or themes of the comic. This will assess the students' ability to summarize, and apply that skill, to continue the development of a plot with supporting details and ideas.

*Make Connections (comprehension strategies):* Students will collaboratively develop their own details to elaborate parts of a story. This will require students to apply narrative dialogue about connecting to the text, and determine correct sequence of events to contribute more details to a part of the story.

*Choice of Flow (graphic novel element):* Students analyze the structure of all previously taught choices in a graphic novel to see how those choices relate to each other as a whole. Students will apply those graphic novel element choices to elaborate a part of the graphic novel, as well as create their own ending to the same graphic novel.

### Common Core State Standards:

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2

Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development;  
summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.5

Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

### **Background Information:**

This background information is for you, the teacher, to quickly get familiar with the basic theory behind the “choice of flow” in a graphic novel.

The “choice of flow” can be described as how all the other individual element choices (frames, gutters, word bubbles, images, movement, and words) are used together to create the whole graphic novel and the flow in reading each reader has when looking at them all. There is no right way to silently read a graphic novel. In fact, many readers read them differently. Some read images and words together panel-by-panel, others may look at the pictures first then go back to read the words. Any way you read the pages in a graphic novel the flow is still present (Brenner, 2015).

This week the story is read as a cumulative review. Students will focus on all graphic novel element choices from past lessons. Using the comprehension skills and strategies of summarizing and making connections will help students understand the complete flow of the graphic novel. Students will express the “choice of flow” in two different ways. Once, as a way to review and enrich certain pages within the story already; the second, by creating their own ending to the graphic novel story that finishes with an unknown ending.

The first 4 days of this lesson are for students to recreate a page by applying all previously taught lesson on graphic novel elements (Cary, 2004; Frey & Fisher, 2008).

This will be shown in the following manner:

- *Frame Choice:* Students number the frame order correctly after cutting and pasting to a larger paper.
- *Use of Gutters:* Scripting the images and looking at the space between the frames will require them to realize, and state, if the gutters are action-to-action, subject-to-subject, or scene-to-scene change.
- *Choice of words:* Students will get to pick what word bubble type to add to the wordless panels, and the vocabulary words they use to put inside the word bubbles.
- *Image Choice:* Scripting the images will allow students to tell the story through just the images choices that were used.
- *Choice of movement:* The movement lines and body actions will be expressed when students describe the movement in their scripting or read aloud.

The last 4 days of this lesson are for students to create their own comic pages to continue the story by applying all previously taught lesson on graphic novel elements (Cary, 2004; Frey & Fisher, 2008). This will be done in the following manner:

- *Prewriting:* Plan and script out the panels for the next “chapter.”
- *Drafting:* Quickly sketch images in the panels that show what your scripted out.
- *Revising:* Improve images with use of details, gutter transitions, and movement lines.
- *Editing:* Rough draft word bubbles types and what goes inside to fill in the

missing parts of the story.

- *Publishing:* Create a final copy to the next chapter. Use best images, colors, and word bubbles inside the frames.

### **Materials:**

- Copies of Explorer: The Mystery Boxes, edited by Kazu Kibuishi (enough for pairs to share the book).
- Interactive poster of the weekly goal for students to focus and learn (see master copies for example/update)
- Photocopies of the wordless comic panels on pages 112, 115, 116, 123 and 124
- Speech bubbles templates (two of each for each student)
- White paper larger than standard size (one for each pair)
- Teacher's examples of written task assignment (use for teacher's reference)
- Chart paper/whiteboard and markers
- Prewriting/Drafting Comics Worksheet (two for each student, once as notes, once as sketches)
- Blank comic panels worksheet (two-sided, one for each student)
- Pencils, and colored pencils
- Post-Its (one for each student)
- Describing Wordless Pages (use for teacher's reference)
- Next Chapter Flow (use for teacher's reference)
- Samples of student created work (use for teacher's reference)



## **Daily Lessons:**

### Day 1:

Use the poster to introduce this week's objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, "I can summarize by making connections when looking at the choice of flow, or all graphic element choices, working together, in a graphic novel."

Today's lesson is to read "The Escape Option" as a group. Give a few min. for the students to silently read the comic, so they can take in the whole story themselves. Bring them all back to the beginning. Ask students about what they think about hiking, spaceships, aliens, Earth Day, etc. This will bring students' individual connection to the story to the forefront of their minds. The teacher begins by reading the first few pages, guiding the students to read the speech bubbles as well as the pictures. Do this by "thinking aloud" about what you notice happening in each frame, and how the pictures are giving just as many clues to what is happening as the words. Also read what each character says in different voices. This is to show students what you expect when it's their turn to read the graphic novel aloud.

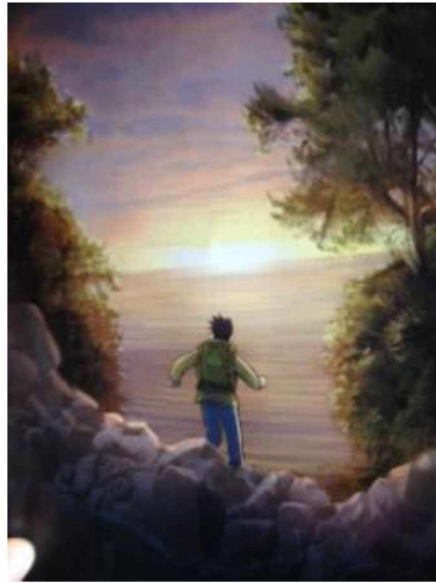
Today's focus is on the panels that do not have any dialogue inside. You will still "read the pictures" through explaining the scene. Tell students that to read these parts of the comic you are really relying on your knowledge of the order of events, summarizing, and making connections, to have this part make sense to you. Read the entire graphic story in this manner, having students take turns reading a page the way you did at the beginning.

When pages 112, 115, 116, 123 and 124 of the comic are "read" by individual students write on a chart or whiteboard the phrases students used to describe the wordless



panels. By now students will be comfortable orally narrating wordless panels to describe the sequence of events (see Describing Wordless Pages photo in master copies).

The final page, 126, is shown:



At the end of the story discuss what each student thinks will happen to the boy, and why he will make the choices he does. Ask students to give events and details from previously in the comic that support their opinion. This will make them apply summarizing and making connections as well. Record students' brainstormed possibilities on a chart as well (see The Next Chapter Flow photo in master copies). While students read aloud here are some following examples my students made that relate to this week's objectives in a graphic novel (Kibuishi, 2011). As a teacher use digression on which examples you want to point out, or others you notice yourself, based on your students comprehension level, your connection to the story, etc.

- P. 113, frame 2: the big frame zooms out to show just how big the box is compared to the kid (example of choice of frames).
- P. 114, frames 1-2: this is an action-to-action use of gutter space. The kids is looking for a camera (example of use of gutters).
- P. 117, frame 3: the alien's "tablet/computer" which my student thought was a stick at first (example of connection), have magic lines coming out of it. Must be why he knows shows much, because the thing is magical (example of choice of movement lines).
- P. 118, whole page: Students make the connection that the alien's computer "Percy" is like the "Siri" on humans' iPhones.
- P. 119, frames 1-3: Percy's word bubbles look different, student make that connection right away, without prompting (example of choice of words).
- P.120, frame 1: Students made the connection that the planet Requius is kind of like Mars, because human scientists are trying to get there too.

## Day 2:

Use the poster to review this week's objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, "I can summarize by making connections when looking at the choice of flow, or all graphic element choices, in a graphic novel."

Have the students to look back at pages 112, 115, 116, and 124. Ask them what they notice about those pages and what they have in common that is missing (no script or dialogue). Show students your teacher example of the script you provided for p. 112. Assign one of the script-less pages to self-chosen pairs. Explain to the students they will

work in pairs to write a script for what is happening on each panel as well as provide dialogue in the panels. Remind them that just as when “reading the pictures” aloud they will write down what is happening in each panel, as well as why it happens to tell the story in more detail. Students will work the remainder of the lesson on their collaborative task. Gather work at the end of the lesson period, in a way that students may continue on their work the following day.

### Day 3:

Use the poster to review this week’s objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, “I can summarize by making connections when looking at the choice of flow, or all graphic element choices, in a graphic novel.”

Students will continue to work on their collaborative task from yesterday. Provide the following directions where all students can see them. These are the steps that pairs need to take to complete the assignment, and are used as reference points on where to start working today:

1. Cut out frames.
2. Re-glue on bigger white paper with more space to write a sentence next to each frame.
3. Number frames in correct sequential order.
4. Script what is happening in the story for each frame.
5. Chose a word bubble to cut out and write what James is saying or thinking in each frame.
6. Meet with the teacher to discuss what type of transition is used between the

panels, and turn in the assignment.

As students work in pairs, walk around the room assessing students' work, guiding their thought process, and making sure that the scripting and words used in the bubbles create more details and development to that part of the plot. Gather completed work at the end of the lesson period, these student created pages will be used in tomorrow's lesson.

#### Day 4:

Use the poster to review this week's objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, "I can summarize by making connections when looking at the choice of flow, or all graphic element choices, in a graphic novel."

Today's lesson is to read "The Escape Option" as a group. The focus is on the panels that do not have words explaining them or any dialogue inside. When you get to pages 112, 115, 116, and 124 in the read aloud display the teacher's and students' created script pages for the group to read, and pairs to share. At this time, guide students in editing their work in sentence structure, as well as explaining in their writing what moves the story from one panel to another better. Often students will explain each panel as an individual picture, not part of a sequence that moves the main idea along.

#### Day 5-7:

Use the poster to review this week's objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, "I can summarize by making connections when looking at the choice of flow, or all graphic element choices, in a graphic novel."

Give a few min. for the students to silently read the comic, so they can take in the whole story themselves. Bring them all to the ending on p.126. Explain to students that this story has an open ending that allows individual readers to predict what will happen next. Review group's predictions they had from day 1 (see The Next Chapter Flow photo in master copies). Have students write their name on one post-it, and place their name next to the main event they want to happen next in the story. Tell the group that they will get to create and expand their own ending to the story. Explain that they will be working like a real comic creator and use the writing process to make sure each graphic novel element choice they have been studying is used in the best way they can for their ending to this story.

Because students will each interpret the story differently they will do this assignment individually. Dialogue and sharing will be encouraged throughout their creative process though. Guide students to refer back to events in the story in order to help further their own connections, story, and summarizing. Allow simple, stick figures, to be drawn. Students will work the next 3- 5 days on their task.

- Tip: Teachers who choose to do days 5-8 of this lesson should create their own 2 page comic example of a possible ending. This allows you to know how to guide your students in the process, and determine what type of problems your students may run into.
- Differentiation Tip: The five steps used in the writing process explained in "Teacher Background" can be broken apart day-to-day for students that need more guidance in the writing process (5days). For students who are more independent you can group the steps as prewriting/drafting, revising/editing, and

publishing to speed up the processes (3 days).

Day 8:

Use the poster to review this week's objectives. Have students say the weekly goal as, "I can summarize by making connections when looking at the choice of flow, or all graphic element choices, in a graphic novel."

Today's lesson is to read "The Escape Option" as a group. Give a few min. for the students to silently read the comic, so they can take in the whole story themselves. Bring them all back to the beginning. Quickly do a teacher summary of the comic, incorporating students' scripted ideas from day 4 on the script-less pages. The focus lesson today is on what will happen at the end of the comic. When you get to page 126 in the read aloud display the students' created comic pages for the group to read, and individuals to share. At this time, guide students in editing their work in sentence structure, dialogue, as well as suggesting ways they can move their story from one panel to another better. If time allows, let students share their favorite comic in the graphic novel, or read the other comic stories that were not part of the unit lessons.

**Assessments:**

Day 3: (Formative): Students' scripting and words used in the bubbles create more details and development to the part of the plot they are making connections to and summarizing.

Day 4: (Summative): The "choice of flow" is correctly understood if the student's created page helps move the story along and provides more detail to the whole summary of the

plot. The connections they made when creating this page should provide a correct summary for that page.

Day 8: (Summative): The “choice of flow” is correctly understood if students continue the ending of a story by creating the next part to an unfinished ending in the story, but keep the central ideas or themes of the comic. This will assess the students’ ability to summarize, and apply element of graphic novels, to continue the development of a plot with supporting details and ideas.

**Master Copies Index:**

Please refer to the following pages that correspond to the Lesson 7 Materials section of the Teacher’s Manual for all the master copies teachers will need to prep for the weekly lessons.



# EXPLORER: <sup>The</sup> Mystery Boxes

Comprehension  
Skill:  
"I can..."

Comprehension  
Strategies:  
"By..."

Graphic  
Novel  
Element

Story:

Sequence  
Events

Understand  
Text  
Structure

Choice  
of  
Frame

Whatzit!

Cause  
and  
Effect

Making  
Inferences

Use of  
Gutters  
Types of  
Transitions

Under the  
Floorboards

Describe  
the plot  
and story  
structure

Understand  
the  
Text  
Structure

Choice  
of  
Word  
Bubbles

The  
Soldier's  
Daughter

Determine  
the author's  
purpose  
and  
Identify the  
Point of View

Making  
Inferences

Choice  
of  
Images

The  
Butter  
Thief

Make  
Predictions

Asking  
Questions

Choice  
of  
Movement

Spring  
Cleaning

Describe  
Figurative  
Language

Visualizing

Choice  
of  
Vocab.  
Words

The  
Keeper's  
Treasure

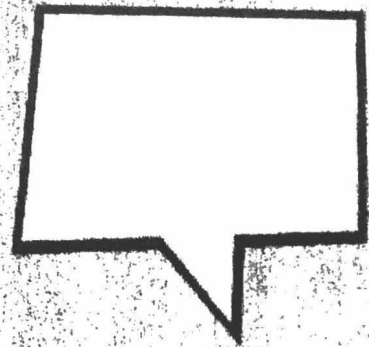
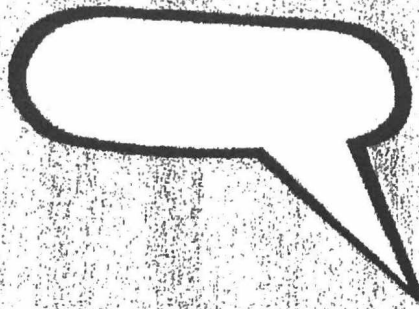
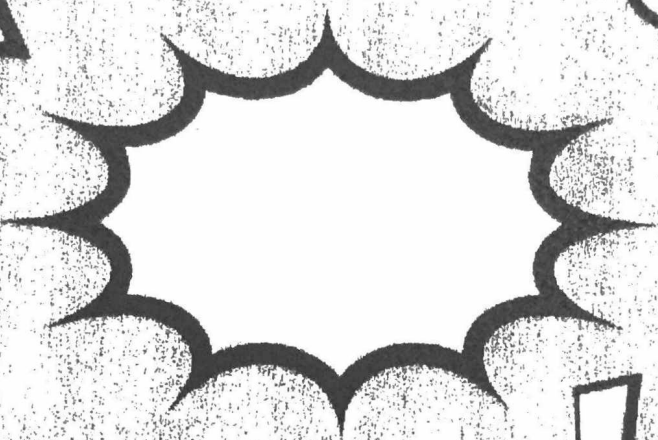
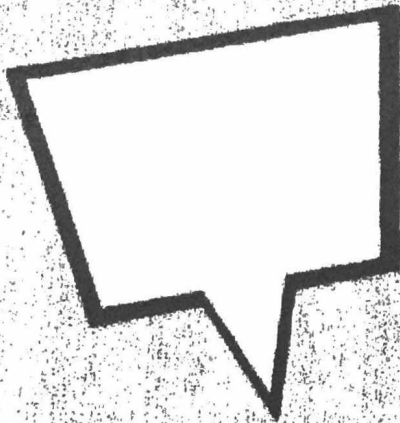
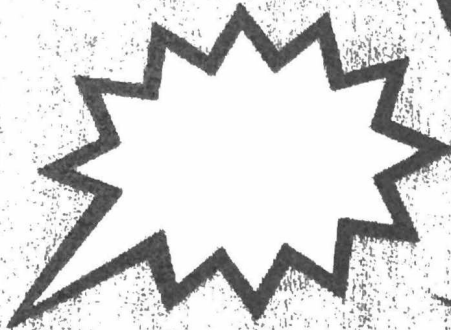
Summarize

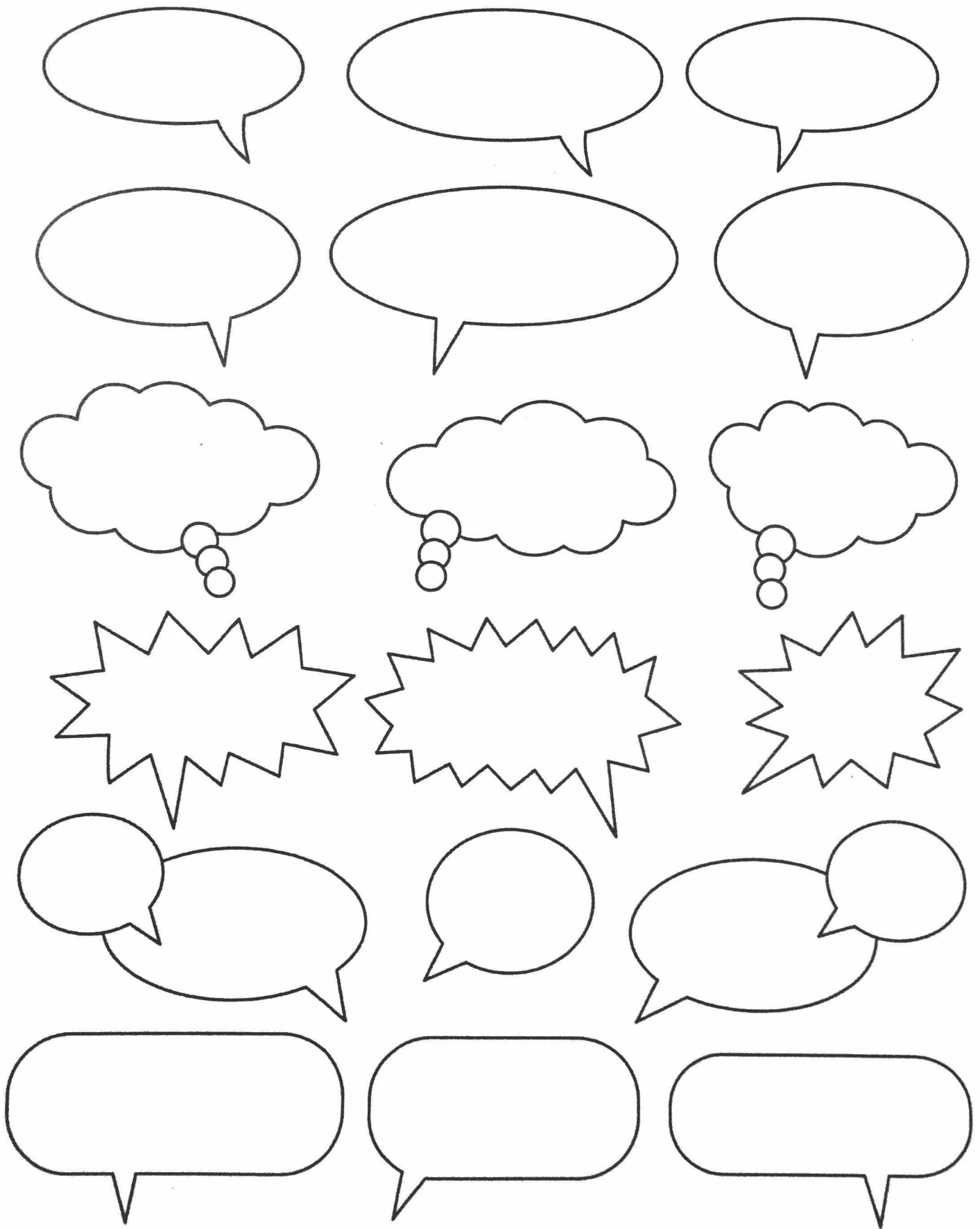
Making  
Connections

Choice  
of  
Flow

The  
Escape  
Option

designed by  [freepik.com](https://www.freepik.com)









①

A boy is taking a hike in the woods next to a clear blue river.

### Gutters

1 → 2 = sub - 2 - sub

2 → 3 = sub - 2 - sub

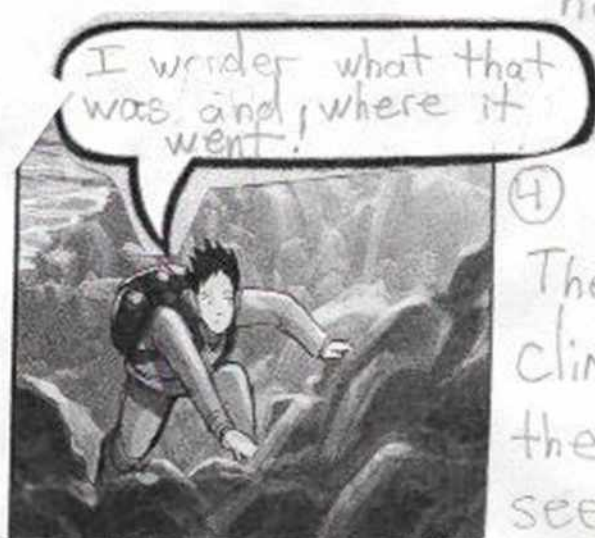
3 → 4 = action - 2 - action



③

The boy is worried something bad could of happened, and wonders what he should do.

② He hears something in the sky. He sees a weird looking box falling through the sky.



④

The brave kid climbs over the rocks to see if he can find where the box landed.

## Prewriting / Drafting Frames

Name:

Title:

Intro. time, setting, characters

Intro. time, setting, characters

Set up James' decision

Set up James' decision

Beginning events

Beginning events

Name:

Title:

Middle events

Middle events

End events

End events

Lesson/Moral James learns

Show Earth at "The End"

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|



# The Escape Option

P.113  
(M)

on a hike

piece of metal falls  
from the sky

wondering

climb over rocks to look  
for it

P.116

(A, J) bubble pops

bubble gum

alien man

confused

P.115 (J/L)

floating bubble

boy is worried

goes into box  
shuts

P.124 (S, D)

falls down

box lift up

movement lines box flies

boy thinks 'wow he did leave

# The Escape Option

James goes back to living his normal life.

James helps save planet Earth right away

James decides to seek out the spaceship box to take him to planet Requius.

James helps save planet Earth when he grows older.

Explanations: The



① James got trapped in a mysterious bubble and is scared.



② The box is making a giant claw come out of the box



③ he get grabbed by the giant claw and it brings James in the box.



④ he's in the bubble the claw is in the box and the box hole is closing



⑤ James is in the box and the box hole is closed



Gutter

1→2 A-2-A  
2→3 sub-2-Sub  
3→4 A-2-A  
4→5 A-2-A

What's going on?  
Where am I?  
What's place am I?  
What's place am I?